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Germany and the Future of Nuclear Deterrence in Europe

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of

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## ABSTRACT

The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the unification of Germany have fundamentally changed the politics of security in Europe. This thesis analyzes German perspectives on the international security environment and offers judgements about the probable future role of nuclear deterrence in Europe.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the unification of Germany have fundamentally changed the politics of security in Europe. The future role of nuclear deterrence is under scrutiny. In several countries, domestic pressures encourage governments to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons. This thesis examines the prudence of such reductions and possible eliminations. It analyzes German perspectives on the international security environment and offers judgements about the probable future role of nuclear deterrence in Europe.

The thesis begins with a survey of the role of nuclear deterrence in the security policy of the Federal Republic of Germany during the period prior to reunification in 1989-1990. This is followed by an analysis of German views on the West European nuclear powers: the United Kingdom and France. German views on the U.S. nuclear presence and U.S. commitments to Europe are then examined. German views on nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union and the potential for proliferation on Europe's periphery complete the survey.

For the short term, Germany will not change its present policies regarding nuclear deterrence in Europe. The German nation is likely to remain preoccupied with the reunification process for several years, and German politicians are not disposed to seek a debate on nuclear deterrence. Germany is apprehensive about

possible instability in the East, but is unwilling to jeopardize the smooth withdrawal of Russian forces from eastern Germany with any new policy ventures. The Germans generally consider Britain and France incapable of providing adequate nuclear protection for the Federal Republic in the foreseeable future, so the Germans will continue to rely on the United States for a credible nuclear guarantee. In the longer term, the Europeans may achieve a level of unity conducive to joint control over nuclear weapons; this might provide the Germans with a viable European alternative. Germans are concerned about potential developing threats from the south, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. It is unlikely that the Germans will pursue a national nuclear deterrent barring the emergence of extreme circumstances-- for example, uncontrolled proliferation in and/or near Europe, antagonistic authoritarian governments to the east, and an inadequate umbrella from either the U.S. or Western Europe. It is in the interests of the United States to avert such a situation by continuing to provide a credible nuclear guarantee to Germany.



## I. INTRODUCTION

The profound changes now underway in Europe have been widely viewed as harbingers of a new age of peace. With the Cold War over, it is said, the threat of war that has hung over Europe for more than four decades is lifting. Swords can now be beaten into ploughshares; harmony can reign among the states and peoples of Europe. Central Europe, which long groaned under the massive forces of the two military blocs, can convert its military bases into industrial parks, playgrounds, and condominiums. Scholars of security affairs can stop their dreary quarrels over military doctrine and balance assessments, and turn their attention to finding ways to prevent global warming and preserve the ozone layer. European leaders can contemplate how to spend peace dividends. So goes the common view.<sup>1</sup>

The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the unification of Germany have fundamentally changed the politics of security in Europe. The future role of nuclear deterrence is under scrutiny. In several countries, domestic pressures encourage governments to reduce and eliminate nuclear weapons. This thesis examines the prudence of such reductions and possible eliminations. It analyzes German perspectives on the international security environment and offers judgements about the probable future role of nuclear deterrence in Europe.

The thesis begins with a survey of the role of nuclear deterrence in the security policy of the Federal Republic of Germany during the period prior to

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<sup>1</sup>John J. Mearsheimer, "Back to the Future: Instability in Europe after the Cold War," International Security Vol. 15, No. 1 (Summer 1990): 5.

reunification in 1989-1990. This is followed by an analysis of German views on the West European nuclear powers: the United Kingdom and France. German views on the U.S. nuclear presence and U.S. commitments to Europe are then examined. German views on nuclear weapons in the former Soviet Union and the potential for proliferation on Europe's periphery complete the survey.

With respect to methodology, this study relies on a qualitative analysis of German perspectives<sup>2</sup> on the future of nuclear deterrence in Europe. A survey of a limited number of primary sources in German, *FBIS*, *The Week in Germany*, *The German Tribune*, and numerous other sources supports this examination. The discussion confines itself to the German perspectives on each issue in an attempt to reach informed judgements about the prospective course of German security policy.

German security policy in 1992 has moved directly into the practical details of the most far-reaching re-assessment and reorganization of the German armed forces since their creation in the middle-1950s.<sup>3</sup> Drastic cuts in forces, as well as a general reorientation to new missions within an altered strategic setting have generally overturned the comfortable assumptions of German defense planning.

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<sup>2</sup>These German perspectives include the Chancellor's Office, the Ministry of Defense, the Foreign Office, German defense experts, German foreign policy experts, and German journalists.

<sup>3</sup>Interview with Professor Donald Abenheim, Stanford University, 23 November 1992.

This process will lead by the end of the century to a vastly different *Bundeswehr* as regards missions, forces, and above all as regards the mentality of military profession and the place of the soldier.

Put very simply, the *Bundeswehr* long existed as a kind of "deterrence army"; that is, a military whose simple existence fulfilled strategic objectives, but whose ranks increasingly lacked the combat experience that is so central to the United States armed forces. The strategic circumstances of the foundation of the *Bundeswehr* in 1955-1965, as well as the basic tenet of its alliance integration greatly circumscribe its missions and function. Although the principal mission of the German armed forces remains that of "national defense," that is, the protection of home territory against assault, the events of the past year lead one to suggest that this customary task will increasingly be overshadowed by smaller-scale rapid reaction missions.

The center-of-gravity of West German defense was long oriented toward the life-or-death contingency of the central front. A chief means to master this challenge lay in the adherence to the imperatives of alliance cohesion. Toward this end, the West Germans created German combat power in concert with the United States and the chief NATO allies. This development was part of a grand Cold War bargain worked out in the 1950s that integrated German military power in a non-threatening manner into the structures of the Western alliance; while at

the same time the Federal Republic of Germany sought to accept its fair share of the burden of Western defense as a sign of its political reliability and military skill. The success of German unification and the disentanglement of the military confrontation in central Europe have brought in German eyes an enormous increase in the sense of national security, although at the same time this development has greatly undermined popular support for the requirement of defense.

The flagging pace of unification in 1992 has placed an extraordinary burden on the makers of German national policy. The difficulties visible, for instance, in the crisis of the European Currency System and the outbreak of xenophobic and racist violence throughout the FRG have moved German observers of national life to speak of the gravest challenge to German democracy since 1949. The making of defense policy cannot remain unaffected by such developments.

This phenomenon is especially evident in what could well be described as the central issue of German defense in 1992: the creation of forces to perform missions and functions removed from NATO. This process might have remained in the realm of speculation for the next ten or more years had not the double-shocks of the Gulf and Yugoslavia wars overwhelmed the makers of German defense policy. German defense minister Volker Rühle has moved forward assertively to provide the means for a greater German role in international



organizations and crisis management; nonetheless, the historical and constitutional limits, as well as obstacle of mentality in the civilian and military spheres, prevent the German armed forces from playing any significant role beyond a handful of symbolic gestures at the moment.<sup>4</sup>

Within the larger context of fundamental change in German defense policy, this thesis analyzes German perspectives on nuclear deterrence. Nuclear weapons play a smaller role in alliance defense policy than during the Cold War. Nonetheless, they are still vital to NATO deterrence policy, as stated in the new strategic doctrine:

To protect peace and to prevent war or any kind of coercion, the Alliance will maintain for the foreseeable future an appropriate mix of nuclear and conventional forces based in Europe and kept up to date where necessary, although at a significantly reduced level. . . . The alliance's conventional forces alone cannot ensure the prevention of war. Nuclear weapons make a unique contribution in rendering the risks of any aggression incalculable and unacceptable. Thus, they remain essential to preserve peace.<sup>5</sup>

Although not the central issue in German security policy today, the evolving role of nuclear deterrence presents numerous challenges for European and international security. Some of these challenges include: What role will be assigned to nuclear deterrence in German security policy in the future? What are the prospects for British-French nuclear cooperation leading to the development

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<sup>4</sup>Abenheim, interview.

<sup>5</sup>*The Alliance's Strategic Concept*, (Brussels, Belgium: NATO Office of Information and Press, November, 1991), p. 9, par. 39.

of a joint "European" deterrent, and would Germany rely on such a guarantee? What is the future of the U.S. nuclear guarantee to Germany? If there is a change of government, will the German people demand the removal of all nuclear weapons from German soil? Might the current government make such a demand? If the U.S. nuclear guarantee was removed and there was no viable European alternative, would the Germans pursue an autonomous national nuclear deterrent? What are German perspectives about potential future threats from the East and the role of nuclear deterrence in addressing such threats? What are German perspectives about potential future threats from the South and the role of nuclear deterrence in addressing such threats? Attempting to draw on a wide range of German perspectives, the analysis that follows will attempt to reach informed judgments about the challenges presented by the future role of nuclear deterrence in European security.

This thesis is based on the assumption that, regardless of the changes in Europe, "atomic weapons will remain an important element in world politics for the foreseeable future."<sup>6</sup> The prospects for worldwide nuclear disarmament are remote. Responsible policy formulation must be conducted in an atmosphere of "nuclear reality." Nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented.

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<sup>6</sup>Karl-Heinz Kamp, "The Future of Nuclear Forces in European Security," at Euro-American Workshop: What Future for Nuclear Forces In International Security? (Paris: *Institut Français des Relations Internationales*), 27 February 1992, 3.

Germany will play a decisive role in the future of nuclear deterrence in Europe. Its geostrategic position and its strong economy have propelled Germany to the leadership position in Central Europe. The ruling coalition has adhered to NATO policy which has, since the October 1991 Nuclear Planning Group meeting, relied on gravity bombs for U.S. and allied dual-capable aircraft in Europe, with an implicit link to American strategic nuclear assets. The SPD opposition proposes a nuclear weapons-free zone (NWFZ) in Central Europe. In a recent poll, "only forty-four percent of the Germans polled believed that nuclear weapons had preserved peace in Europe while sixty-three percent stated that nuclear weapons had endangered peace."<sup>7</sup> These divergent German perspectives provide part of the baseline for debates about nuclear weapons matters in the Federal Republic.

Germany monitors potential French and British nuclear decisions with interest. Both the United Kingdom and France have repeatedly reaffirmed their positions as autonomous nuclear powers and are reluctant to emulate superpower nuclear force reductions. The prospect of Anglo-French nuclear cooperation leading to the development of a joint "European" deterrent appears doubtful in the foreseeable future. Neither country seems likely to sacrifice its autonomy of

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<sup>7</sup>Ronald D. Asmus, "Germany in Transition: National Self-Confidence and International Reticence," statement before the House Sub-Committee on Europe and the Middle East, Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 1992, 5.

decision making, and the Germans are probably unwilling to rely on nuclear guarantees from countries they appear to perceive as "lesser powers." The basis for these judgments is discussed in Chapter III.

The Federal Republic has traditionally relied on the nuclear commitment of the United States. The American troop levels in Europe have implicitly been attached to the U.S. nuclear commitment and the current reductions in the U.S. military presence may place this nuclear commitment in question, especially if German public opinion and/or future governments will no longer accept any U.S. nuclear presence-- that is, not even air-delivered weapons. The Germans could find themselves in a difficult position if the nuclear commitment from the United States declined without a viable replacement.

Germany faces this dilemma while assorted risks and threats evolve in the East and South. Uncertainty surrounds the future of the nuclear weapons in the former republics of the Soviet Union, particularly Russia, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan. How should Germany respond to nuclear proliferation in countries in the Middle East and North Africa? These potential threats to Western Europe are vital factors in the future strategic planning of the region.

The Federal Republic is faced with decisions of enduring importance and extreme complexity as it formulates its policy on nuclear weapons. It must take into account an unpredictable, dismantling "former superpower" with nuclear

weapons and an immense conventional force capability. Germany also must plan for the probable emergence of new power centers that will almost certainly become nuclear as technology proliferation continues.

These are difficult decisions for a nation that continues to renounce autonomous nuclear weapons development. The debate is complicated further as the interests and policies of Germany's European neighbors must be included in any future nuclear security plans. Maintaining credible nuclear protection would represent a great challenge for the Federal Republic if the Americans turned inward and the French and British remained aloof.



## II. THE ROLE OF NUCLEAR DETERRENCE IN THE SECURITY POLICY OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY PRIOR TO REUNIFICATION

### A. INTRODUCTION

Nuclear deterrence has been the central pillar of alliance strategy since the founding of the Federal Republic of Germany. Initially in a position of limited-sovereignty, West Germany struggled to absorb the evolving alliance strategy. As West German power increased, alliance security policy reflected greater German influence. Throughout the period from 1949-1989, West Germany influenced alliance security policy to meet German national interests. According to Chancellor Kohl, this process laid the groundwork for the pinnacle of West German foreign and security policy, Germany's unification.

It is clear to me today, that everything that happened in foreign and security policy after 1983 and up until German unification began with the NATO-*Doppelbeschluss* (Nato dual-track decision, the decision to station medium-range missiles in the Federal Republic). We showed the Soviet Union . . . that the West will not let itself be forced to its knees. My political fate was bound up with that decision. If we had not participated, the confidence we enjoyed among our allies with regard to German unity would have been considerably diminished, not least with the Americans.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Helmut Kohl, interview with *Welt am Sonntag* in *The Week in Germany*, 2 October 1992, 2.

The focus of this chapter is the role assigned to nuclear deterrence in West German security policy prior to November 1989. The chapter surveys the major points in the development of the Federal Republic's nuclear policy, including its initially dependent status under Adenauer, its first formulation under Strauss, its refinement under Schmidt, and its final assertion under Kohl.

The chapter considers the evolution of the nuclear issues in West German security policy in four phases: (1) 1945-1960, (2) 1961-1969, (3) 1970-1979, (4) 1980-1989. These periods were selected to divide the era into approximately equal segments while containing related topics. In each phase the controversies, debates and policy struggles of West German security policy will be analyzed as they relate to nuclear deterrence. The chapter concludes with a summary of dominant themes.

## **B. 1945-1960**

### **1. Adenauer Laying the Foundation: 1945-1953**

The role of nuclear deterrence in West German security policy was heavily influenced by the Federal Republic's first chancellor, Konrad Adenauer. Adenauer was dependent on the counsel of his military advisors, General Speidel and General Heusinger, because his knowledge of military affairs was limited. Nonetheless, Adenauer had judgments about nuclear deterrence and U.S. nuclear

capabilities at a very early point. In Adenauer's *Memoirs*, these judgments are described as affecting his approach to security policy as early as 1946.

Adenauer was critical of American policy towards Germany and the Soviet Union immediately following World War II. According to Adenauer,

The policy of the Western Allies towards us showed all too clearly that they had not recognized the Soviet aim. The United States of America had an atomic monopoly and saw in this, rather short-sightedly, an absolute guarantee of superiority to any danger that might threaten from the direction of Soviet Russia.<sup>9</sup>

Adenauer was reluctant to place too much emphasis on the value of nuclear deterrence.

This reluctance was reinforced with the first Soviet test explosion of an atom bomb in 1949. Adenauer did not believe that the Americans would use atomic weapons against the Soviet Union to protect the Federal Republic. "I considered it extremely doubtful that in such a contingency, in which not the Soviet Union but the Soviet zone government was the aggressor, the United States would use atomic weapons against Russia."<sup>10</sup>

The Korean War highlighted the limitations of nuclear deterrence from Adenauer's perspective. "The United States had placed too much reliance on its atomic weapons and measures of economic assistance. [The North Korean

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<sup>9</sup>Konrad Adenauer, *Memoirs 1945-53*, trans. Beate Ruhm von Oppen (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1966), 78.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 273, 275, 281.

invasion of] South Korea demonstrated that these were not enough to halt communism."<sup>11</sup> Adenauer's early judgements about nuclear deterrence and American commitments provided the foundation of West Germany's future security policy.

## 2. The Nonproduction Pledge: 1954

The Federal Republic's first formal action with respect to nuclear weapons policy was Adenauer's 1954 nonproduction pledge. In the 1954 London and Paris accords which provided for West Germany's accession to NATO, the Germans pledged that:

The Federal Republic undertakes not to manufacture in its territory any atomic weapons . . . defined as any weapon which contains . . . nuclear fuel . . . and which, by . . . uncontrolled nuclear transformation of the nuclear fuel . . . is capable of mass destruction . . . [or] any part, device, assembly or material especially designed for . . . any [such] weapon.<sup>12</sup>

Much controversy has surrounded the pledge and the conditions under which it was made. This section examines the political context of the pledge and

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<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, 319.

<sup>12</sup>Protocol III, on the Control of Armaments, Annex I (incorporating the provisions of Annex II, paragraph 103), reprinted together with the other protocols modifying the Brussels and North Atlantic treaties in Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, *Protocol on the Termination of the Occupation Regime in the Federal Republic of Germany and Protocol to the North Atlantic Treaty on Accession of the Federal Republic of Germany*, Executives L and M, 83rd Congress, 2nd sess. (1954); quoted in Catherine McArdle Kelleher, *Germany and the Politics of Nuclear Weapons* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1975), 9.

its origins in the negotiations for the ill-fated European Defense Community (EDC).

According to Catherine Kelleher, "The 1954 pledge can be viewed in many respects as the last in a series of control measures set down by the wartime Allies for a defeated and, subsequently, not-yet-sovereign Germany."<sup>13</sup> After World War II, any connection between Germany and the production of armaments, especially nuclear, was strictly controlled. From an American perspective, the outbreak of the Korean War made the establishment of West German armed forces an immediate requirement. The European Defense Community was the initial attempt to meet the need for rearmament while allaying international fears of a resurgent Germany.

The EDC was in essence a French attempt to institutionalize European control over German rearmament. When the EDC was not ratified by the French National Assembly, essential elements of the EDC's nuclear negotiations were carried over into the 1954 pledge. Adenauer knew that the French would be unwilling to accept German rearmament without some restrictions.

Adenauer established several conditions for his 1954 pledge. One of these was equality; Adenauer was not willing to accept a *Bundeswehr* that was inferior to its allies. He also demanded full sovereignty for the Federal Republic

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<sup>13</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 11.



and a security guarantee from the United States. Adenauer clearly stated that his pledge had been given only *rebus sic stantibus*--"that is, only for as long as Bonn believed the conditions under which it was given still existed."<sup>14</sup>

Some controversy remains over the Federal Republic's interest in autonomous nuclear weapons production. The German organization established to produce an atomic weapon during World War II was many years behind the American project. After the war there was little or no interest in developing such weapons in Germany. "So far as it existed at all, the problem of German production of nuclear weapons existed almost solely in the perceptions, the fears, and the plans of the wartime Allies."<sup>15</sup>

### 3. The Transition: 1955-1956

The renunciation pledge helped to set the stage for the Federal Republic's entrance into NATO in 1955. At that time there was a great reliance on nuclear weapons within the alliance.

It was expected that war would begin with massive nuclear blows: the ground forces would be the "shield" whose task was to fight a brief action in Germany while the strategic air force, the "sword," would paralyze the opponent.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Konrad Adenauer, *Erinnerungen, 1953-1955* (Stuttgart: Deutsche Verlags Anstalt, 1966), 346-47; quoted in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 10.

<sup>15</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 28.

<sup>16</sup>James L. Richardson, *Germany and the Atlantic Alliance*, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1966), 40.

The first major combat exercise which tested this theory was Carte Blanche, conducted June 20-28, 1955. Carte Blanche "produced widespread unrest and agitation within the Federal Republic."<sup>17</sup> Much of this reaction stemmed from reports in the weekly magazine *Der Spiegel* stressing the maneuver's simulated results:

More than 300 atomic bombs dropped on more than 100 targets between Hamburg and Munich, with 1.7 million Germans killed, 3.5 million wounded, and incalculable additional casualties resulting from fallout.<sup>18</sup>

The fear of nuclear destruction in Germany resulting from Carte Blanche lingered as the Federal Republic met its next nuclear policy crisis in July 1956.

Known in the Federal Republic as the Radford Crisis, this controversy stemmed from a *New York Times* story of 13 July 1956. The article outlined a change in American strategic planning proposed by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Admiral Arthur Radford. Admiral Radford was calling for a greater reliance on nuclear weapons and a reduction of conventional forces.<sup>19</sup>

For the Germans this plan entailed a reduced U.S. conventional presence in the Federal Republic offset by increased tactical nuclear weapons. Chancellor Adenauer was reluctant to rely on nuclear deterrence and was in the

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<sup>17</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 36.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>19</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 43-44.

process of gathering political support for conventional rearmament. The chancellor "voiced a muted criticism of American policy in a brief article on the dangers of an overemphasis on nuclear weapons"<sup>20</sup>:

Since, in my opinion, atomic weapons truly constitute the greatest danger for all humanity, I therefore consider it right to push now for controlled disarmament. All energy should be used to make nuclear war impossible. In my view, it is particularly important to localize possible smaller conflicts. And for that we need divisions with conventional weapons. Their number must be sufficient to prevent a small spark from igniting a rocket war between continents. In their planned numbers, the German divisions could contribute much to this. . . . As resolutely as I support all which can serve controlled disarmament, I unequivocally declare my opposition to any conversion [*Umrüstung*] to atomic weapons. Too, if the West reduces its ground forces, the land army of the Russian colossus will gain importance with respect to Europe.<sup>21</sup>

Carte Blanche had demonstrated the colossal devastation which a nuclear engagement could inflict on the Germans. The Federal Republic was reluctant to adopt this new American strategic doctrine. This strategy presented the West German public and its political and military leadership with the reality of their security dilemma: How to rely on a deterrent which, if it failed, would result in Germany becoming a nuclear battleground and suffering certain destruction?

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<sup>20</sup>Richardson, 45.

<sup>21</sup>*Westdeutsche Rundschau*, 27 July 1956; cited in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 47.

Nevertheless, the West Germans were obliged to accept the change in strategic planning due to their reliance on U.S. and NATO support. The Federal Republic decided to make the revisions in planning, but it was reluctant to present them to a public made fearful by the Carte Blanche crisis and also afraid of a U.S. withdrawal from Germany. Therefore the Adenauer regime used the Radford crisis to make the United States the "whipping boy" for revisions which were difficult politically.<sup>22</sup>

The Radford and Carte Blanche crises set the stage for hard German political decisions with respect to nuclear weapons. The Germans eventually had to play a greater role in the decision-making regarding nuclear weapons to prevent a perception of separated roles within the alliance. Franz Josef Strauss, serving as minister for atomic affairs, "hinted at the policy of atomic arms for the *Bundeswehr*, asserting that a power without nuclear weapons would capitulate before an ultimatum of an atomic power."<sup>23</sup> Any decision to maintain a nuclear capability, no matter how limited, was certain to fuel political opposition both domestically and internationally. How could the Federal Republic balance its security requirements with the divergent demands of its allies and its populace?

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<sup>22</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 49.

<sup>23</sup>*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 September 1956; cited in Richardson, 44.

#### 4. Gaining Access to Nuclear Weapons: 1957-1960

West Germany's decision to provide the *Bundeswehr* with delivery vehicles capable of being fitted with nuclear weapons, which would be controlled by the United States, was one of the most controversial in its history. It inflamed a volatile populace, raised fears abroad, and brought the issue of control-sharing to the forefront.

##### a. *German Strategic Thinking and the Role of Franz Josef Strauss*

The central strategic issues for the Federal Republic in this period were:

The details and implications of the Germans' full participation in a system based on (1) the early use of tactical nuclear weapons on their territory and (2) on the sufficiency of American strategic nuclear forces to ensure deterrence of enemy attack and guarantee of German security, at a time when the advent of Soviet-American strategic parity was foreseen.<sup>24</sup>

Franz Josef Strauss, the Minister of Defense from 1956 to 1962, played the dominant role in determining the Federal Republic's response to this challenge.

Strauss guided German security policy with four main convictions: regarding the past as a closed issue, complete adherence to the West, reunification through strength, and equal status within the alliance framework.<sup>25</sup> He considered nuclear weapons the "key to military and political power" and worked

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<sup>24</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 61.

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 72-73.



to ensure that in all areas within NATO, "the Federal Republic would be a primary, equal participant."<sup>26</sup> Strauss maintained these convictions through two major nuclear policy challenges of 1957: the Soviet launching of Sputnik, and the Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) study on future European defense requirements in an era of approaching strategic nuclear parity.

The SHAPE study and the Sputnik launch intensified the German debate on security policy. The German security discussion experienced a transformation with the realization that the United States no longer enjoyed "absolute" security, and was susceptible to Soviet nuclear attack. NATO's deterrence system was based on the threat of strategic retaliation from the United States. When the U.S. became more vulnerable, the question arose whether Washington would be willing to sacrifice New York for Bonn, or Los Angeles for Paris.

Public acceptance by Europeans of the concept of limited war fought in Europe with nuclear or conventional forces that were somehow separated from the strategic retaliatory power of the United States would not only undermine the deterrence system, it would also admit the unconfrontable: repetition of World War II.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 73-74.

<sup>27</sup>*Ibid.*, 75.

Strauss confronted these new circumstances with positions similar to his American contemporaries. Much like Adenauer he was wary of placing too much reliance on nuclear weapons.

It is even more necessary not to attempt war prevention through dependence on the pure deterrent factor of ultimate great weapons but rather to keep in view the possibility of meeting more limited conflicts with more limited weapons, most especially situations in the non-European sphere.<sup>28</sup>

Nevertheless Strauss was a strong proponent of the concept of "graduated deterrence." He saw deterrent value in tactical nuclear weapons, and his interest in alliance equality ensured that Germany would have access to such weapons.

If the attacker knows he faces a defense armed only with conventional weapons, he can mass his troops for a breakthrough since he knows he has no atomic strike to fear. The defense, on the other hand, must disperse its force--in a form suitable for defense against conventional attacks--because it cannot be at all sure that the attacker will not use tactical atomic weapons. The conventional breakthrough of the atomically armed invader will thus be favored. . . . A temptation to aggression . . . thus will result.<sup>29</sup>

A final issue of West German strategic thought during this period was forward defense. Meeting the enemy on the border was essential for the strategically narrow Federal Republic. Loose talk of a defense on the Rhine met

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<sup>28</sup>*Bulletin des Presse--und Informationsamtes der Bundesregierung*, 17 October 1957; quoted in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 80.

<sup>29</sup>Franz Josef Strauss, "Preis des Friedens," *Wehrtechnische Monatshefte*, September, 1958, 394; cited in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 81.

heavy West German resistance. Strauss rejected operational guidelines that would prevent or prejudice "the most resistance necessary as close to the border as possible."<sup>30</sup>

The German government finally accepted a system which required a nuclear-capable *Bundeswehr* for several reasons. One point argued by both Adenauer and Strauss was the force of technological development. As Adenauer argued, "Today, atomic armament is in flood tide. The Germans must adapt themselves to the new circumstances."<sup>31</sup> Strauss echoed these views, predicting that "atomic armament would come in all European armies . . . the *Bundeswehr* must also adapt itself to this apocalyptic military future."<sup>32</sup>

The government also insisted on the continual theme of equality, striving for a primary role within the alliance. NATO had decided there was a requirement for nuclear weapons in Europe. Acquiring tactical nuclear weapons was the only way to avoid a meaningless armament and the perception of the

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<sup>30</sup>*Neue Zürcher Zeitung*, 10 May 1959; cited in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 85.

<sup>31</sup>Adenauer, *Erinnerungen*, 296; cited in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 93.

<sup>32</sup>*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 February 1957; cited in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 93.

Federal Republic as a "weak link."<sup>33</sup> As Adenauer declared in the final debate in the Bundestag on this issue:

I want as many Germans as possible to hear this. If an important part of NATO doesn't possess weapons as strong as those of its potential opponents . . . then it has neither significance nor importance. If the strategic planning of NATO--and we must naturally and will naturally test this--desires that we too, the Federal Republic, make use of this development, and if we hesitate to do so, then we automatically leave NATO (and are left at the mercy of the Soviet Union).<sup>34</sup>

### *b. Domestic and International Opposition*

Domestic opposition to a nuclear-armed *Bundeswehr* was expressed in the spring of 1957 when the Social Democratic Party (SPD) proposed halting the spread of nuclear weapons. The SPD proposed to end nuclear arming of the *Bundeswehr* and to refuse allied nuclear weapons stationing on German territory. Concurrently, eighteen leading physicists presented the government with the Göttingen Appeal of April 1957:

Today a small country like the Federal Republic will best protect itself and do the most to advance world peace by expressly and voluntarily rejecting the possession of atomic weapons of any kind.<sup>35</sup>

The SPD's opposition to the nuclear armament of the *Bundeswehr* was a logical progression from its general stand against armament in general.

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<sup>33</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 93

<sup>34</sup>Federal Republic of Germany, Bundestag, *Verhandlungen: Stenographische Berichte*, 20 March 1958, 843; cited in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 94.

<sup>35</sup>*Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 13 April 1957; cited in Richardson, 49.

The SPD continually criticized Adenauer for his attachment to the West. In the opinion of the SPD, reunification could best be achieved through a position of neutrality. Adenauer's plan to negotiate reunification through a position of strength, which meant an attachment to NATO, would--the SPD argued--only hurt chances for a united Germany. The SPD believed that "unilateral renunciation of nuclear weapons or perhaps creation of a Central European nuclear-free zone to be a necessary and acceptable precondition for any serious future negotiations toward reunification."<sup>36</sup>

The SPD attempted to use the nuclear armament issue to its political advantage. The bitter flavor of the parliamentary debates in the spring of 1958 was an indication of SPD attempts to discredit the Adenauer regime for political gain.

Speakers for the SPD . . . described the government's policy variously as an indulgence of Strauss'[s] desire to play at soldiers, an indication of the Chancellor's subservience to John Foster Dulles, and a sign that the military caste was reasserting its dominance in German life. Speakers for the government tended to . . . regard oppositionists as pro-Communists and neutralists.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 115.

<sup>37</sup>Gordon Craig, "Germany and NATO: The Rearmament Debate, 1950-58," in Klaus Knorr, ed., *NATO and American Security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), 245; cited in Jeffrey Boutwell, *The German Nuclear Dilemma* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), 23.



When its efforts in the *Bundestag* failed, the SPD took the issue to the streets in the form of the "*Kampf dem Atomtod*" (Campaign against Atomic Death). This five month movement consisted of "innumerable emotional speeches, rallies, protest demonstrations, attempts to institute popular referenda that were expressly prohibited by the Basic Law, and mountains of antiatomic propaganda."<sup>38</sup>

There was widespread public opposition to nuclear armament of the *Bundeswehr* and against atomic weapons being stationed in West Germany. Numerous polls showed from sixty to eighty percent of the public opposing nuclear weapons in Germany.<sup>39</sup> Nonetheless, the SPD was unable to transform this opposition into electoral victories, and therefore was unable to stop the tide of nuclear armament.

External opposition to West Germany's search for equality in nuclear-capable weapons came from the East and opposition politicians and analysts in the West.<sup>40</sup> Both sides had similar goals: a nuclear-free Central Europe. Through disengagement and a reduction in military tension, the East

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<sup>38</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 113.

<sup>39</sup>Elisabeth Noelle and Erich Peter Neumann, eds., *The Germans: Public Opinion Polls, 1947-1966* (Allensbach: Institut für Demoskopie, 1967), 441; cited in Boutwell, 20, also see various polls quoted in footnote 38, Richardson, 57.

<sup>40</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 116.

promised reunification and the opposition in the West promised peace. The Eastern position was dominated by the Soviets and outlined in the Rapacki proposals of 1957 and 1958. These proposals called for a nuclear-free zone covering Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic (GDR), and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG). The West German government did not trust the Soviets to deliver on their promise of reunification through denuclearization. There was also concern about the effects of a denuclearized Germany on the alliance.

Denuclearization would mean that Germany would have imposed upon it permanently a different status from the other members of the alliance. As the state most in need of protection, it would become, in a period when American vulnerability was beginning to cast doubt on the credibility of an American nuclear response, the state whose protection by the alliance was most doubtful.<sup>41</sup>

Opposition to the presence of nuclear weapons in West Germany was expressed by leaders of the British Labour Party (then in opposition, not in government) and by intellectuals such as George Kennan. The Western advocates of disengagement and denuclearization concentrated on what they considered the "intolerable, inherently unstable status quo in Central Europe."<sup>42</sup> Fears resurfaced of a German national nuclear deterrent force, but all Western

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<sup>41</sup>Richardson, 55.

<sup>42</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 119.

governments rejected the disengagement and denuclearization advocacy of certain opposition parties and intellectuals.

The West German government refused to submit to what it termed political discrimination. West Germany was unwilling to hold a separate position within the alliance. A non-nuclear-capable *Bundeswehr* would serve the ultimate design of the Soviet position--that is, separating West Germany from its alliance partners.

### *c. Control-Sharing*

The control-sharing issue gained importance in the alliance in the late 1950s as U.S. nuclear weapons began to arrive on European soil. Control-sharing is defined as "European participation in the stockpiling, targeting, and use of nuclear warheads."<sup>43</sup> While Britain and France were pursuing autonomous national nuclear capabilities, the Federal Republic was desperately trying to carve out a niche in NATO's new nuclear arena.

The Federal Republic was uniquely constrained in its nuclear policy. The West Germans were trapped between a renunciation pledge and an intense requirement for participation in all levels of decision-making as the front line state. Germans could neither produce, or threaten to produce, a national nuclear deterrent. Participation in a European force was infeasible. Bonn was

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<sup>43</sup>Boutwell, 36.

completely reliant on Washington's control-sharing policy, and as the most exposed NATO state, deeply concerned with the outcome of the process.<sup>44</sup> Adenauer was interested in nuclear-control sharing that "guaranteed nuclear-weapon release before the Federal Republic's territory had been overrun and, more important, that would convince the Soviets of Western European if not American determination to use nuclear weapons."<sup>45</sup>

The nuclear control-sharing issue inflamed differences within the alliance. The British were against armament of the *Bundeswehr* with nuclear weapons, or any mention of European nuclear cooperation. The British wanted to maintain their unique relationship with the United States and were unwilling to permit further nuclear sharing within the alliance.<sup>46</sup>

The French were more interested in drawing German resources away from the United States and in preparing for an eventual U.S. withdrawal from the continent by increasing West European capabilities. The French were willing to include German financial support in their weapons research and development. Negotiations in this area evolved into the F-I-G: a consortium of France, Italy and West Germany to produce modern weapons. When de Gaulle

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<sup>44</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 123.

<sup>45</sup>*Ibid.*, 127.

<sup>46</sup>*Ibid.*, pp.144-145.

returned to the French government in 1958, he ended the progress of the F-I-G consortium.<sup>47</sup>

The control-sharing debate was particularly inflammatory during the late 1950s. The West Germans responded to Western anxieties with accusations of political discrimination. Strauss demanded equality in the nuclear realm, and at times explicitly threatened the consequences of inequality. "I can guarantee that for three, four, or even five years there will be no German nuclear weapons. After that, however, if other states, especially France, produce their own atomic bombs, Germany could also be dragged in."<sup>48</sup>

In the end, the West Germans chose to rely on control-sharing through NATO. A multi-lateral umbrella was the safest political route for the Federal Republic. NATO control-sharing allowed the Federal Republic to forgo a decision between the United States and France, and pursue a equal position within the alliance.

### C. 1961-1969

The 1950s were a difficult decade for the West Germans as they were forced to accept the reality of the vital role of nuclear weapons in the defense of the

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<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, 151.

<sup>48</sup>Interview in *Daily Mirror*, 2 April 1958, quoted in Hans Frederick, *Franz Josef Strauss: Das Lebensbild eines Politikers* (Munich-Inning: Humboldt, n.d.), 190; cited in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 150.



Federal Republic. The 1960s were equally turbulent because "flexible response" challenged much of the nuclear deterrence theory that the West Germans had accepted in the 1950s. The controversy over the multilateral nuclear force (MLF) and the non-proliferation treaty (NPT) ignited fears of a German national nuclear deterrent.

This section begins with a survey of the discord over strategy as West Germany accepted flexible response. It continues the discussion on control-sharing exhibited in the MLF debate, and concludes with a discussion of the NPT and fears of a German national nuclear deterrent.

### **1. Discord over Strategy: 1961-1962**

The American introduction of flexible response as a new NATO strategy was received unfavorably in the Federal Republic. In the opinion of many West Germans, Secretary of Defense McNamara's emphasis on conventional defense in Europe jeopardized the American nuclear guarantee. Adenauer's efforts at *rapprochement* with France made agreement to the new strategy impossible, given French opposition to any moves away from massive retaliation. Moreover, the SPD had supported the new American strategy, and West German government officials apparently felt threatened by U.S. attempts to court the opposition.

Minister of Defense Franz Josef Strauss was a primary opponent of flexible response. In March 1961, Strauss contended that while

he understood the need for conventional arms strength, [any agreement] to meet conventional attack, whether large or small, with conventional weapons alone was the ideal invitation for an aggressor to attempt such an attack, knowing that it would not be as dangerous.<sup>49</sup>

Strauss also believed that public pronouncements about flexibility weakened deterrence and exposed the Federal Republic to Soviet pressure.<sup>50</sup> He valued tactical nuclear weapons and their role in forward defense, and pushed for West German equality within the alliance with respect to nuclear armament.

The Berlin crisis of 1961 illuminated the paradox in German nuclear strategy. The Federal Republic was reluctant to accept the strategy of flexible response because it questioned any movement away from the previous policy of threatening an early use of nuclear weapons. Yet when the German Democratic Republic built the Berlin wall in 1961, the FRG was as unwilling as other NATO governments to consider the use of nuclear means to resolve the crisis.

In short, a strong emphasis on the early use of nuclear weapons was regarded by the German leadership as essential to maintaining a credible deterrent. But when confronted with an actual crisis, all other responses--diplomatic, economic, even conventional--were clearly preferable.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>*Guardian*, 17 March 1961; cited in Jane E. Stromseth, *The Origins of Flexible Response* (London: The Macmillan Press, 1988) 125.

<sup>50</sup>Stromseth, 125.

<sup>51</sup>*Ibid.*, 127.

The experience of confronting a crisis caused many West Germans to reassess their attitude towards flexible response.

Reconciliation with the United States on this issue was still several years away. In 1962, German-American discord peaked as the Americans attempted to educate the allies on the new NATO strategy. McNamara presented American perspectives in unprecedented detail during the North Atlantic Council meeting at Athens.

For the Germans these sessions seemed to provide further evidence of the Americans' determination to impose, not to discuss, changes in the common strategy, changes that would benefit the United States. The decisions already had been made and publicized; German counterarguments were obstacles to be overcome, not legitimate points worthy of further consideration.<sup>52</sup>

This dominant American position came to light again in the continuing control-sharing debate. The Berlin crisis brought renewed emphasis on West German demands for NATO control of tactical nuclear weapons in Europe. Adenauer raised the issue of a short response time:

We must arrange within NATO so that a decision can be taken to use atomic weapons before the President is heard from . . . for it may be that an immediate decision has to be taken when the fate of all could be decided in one hour and the President . . . cannot be reached.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>52</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, pp. 173-174.

<sup>53</sup>*New York Times*, 17 November 1961; quoted in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, pp. 184-185.

Strauss was more explicit with his remarks. In response to McNamara's claims of American strategic superiority, Strauss questioned what the future held when the Soviets obtained strategic parity. Strauss feared that a Europe without an adequate deterrent would face nuclear blackmail; the Soviets would offer the U.S. sanctuary for non-intervention.<sup>54</sup> Once again, fears of Strauss's "nuclear obsession" were raised as he implicitly threatened an eventual national nuclear deterrent if West German control-sharing requirements were not met.<sup>55</sup>

## 2. Strategic Reconciliation and the MLF: 1963-1966

A change in leadership in the Federal Republic helped to bring a more conciliatory posture to allied relations. Adenauer's successor, Ludwig Erhard (who took office in October 1963), and Strauss's successor, Kai-Uwe von Hassel (who took office in October 1962), both emphasized closer relations with the United States. This conciliatory policy led to NATO's acceptance of forward defense and renewed efforts to establish mutually satisfactory nuclear control-sharing arrangements.

West Germany's primary diplomatic accomplishment during this period was the NATO agreement to Bonn's conception of forward defense. The

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<sup>54</sup>Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 186.

<sup>55</sup>*Ibid.*, 186.

decision to plan for a defense of the Federal Republic at its border with East Germany was a goal of the West Germans since entering the alliance. Defense Minister von Hassel commented on the importance of forward defense from the West German perspective:

This is a matter of life and death for my country. To regard the Federal Republic, or even a larger part of Western Europe, solely as a battlefield, which NATO forces would have to liberate afterward, would forecast the total destruction of Western Europe.<sup>56</sup>

Differences remained on the interpretation of strategic doctrine. Flexible response had become more acceptable to the Federal Republic, but concerns remained as to the validity of the American guarantee. As Kai-Uwe von Hassel argued,

The concept of flexible response in Europe--both political and military--must not be interpreted to mean that the so-called atomic threshold can be raised unduly high, without reference to political considerations. Apart from the fact that this would lead the potential aggressor to think that he could calculate his risk, it would create a situation in which he could seize pawns for future negotiations.<sup>57</sup>

Another major topic of this period was the multilateral nuclear force (MLF). The MLF was an American attempt to stem what was feared might become a growing tide of nuclear proliferation in Europe while meeting the control-sharing needs of its alliance partners. The proposal was "for a jointly

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<sup>56</sup>Kai-Uwe von Hassel, "Organizing Western Defense," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 43, No. 2 (January 1965): 211.

<sup>57</sup>*Ibid.*, 211.



owned, financed and controlled multilateral force--a fleet of 25 mix-manned surface ships each carrying eight Polaris missiles."<sup>58</sup> The West German government supported the program, concentrating on its political effects.

The Multilateral Force as a whole would constitute a substantial military capacity. Its major importance, however, would be its political aspect. It would provide an additional political link between the European and American partners to the Alliance. Its close interlacing with the nuclear potential of the United States would result in strengthening the deterrent on the one hand, and establishing strong ties between Europe and America on the other.<sup>59</sup>

There was opposition to the MLF concept within West Germany. The opposition originated with a "Gaullist" faction which resisted the government's Atlanticist emphasis. Former Defense Minister Franz Josef Strauss summarized this viewpoint when he declared,

We Europeans should not place blind confidence in the reliability and trustworthiness of the Americans, who do not wish without more ado to let themselves be drawn into an atomic war . . . So long as Europe has no nuclear weapons, Europe has no sovereignty. The only solution is to pool British and French weapons--which should be fully supported by the full transfer of American know-how. Thus in the long run a European atomic force would come into existence under the precondition, of course, of political union.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Stromseth, 75.

<sup>59</sup>Kai-Uwe von Hassel, "Détente Through Firmness," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 42, No. 2 (January 1964): 189.

<sup>60</sup>*Die Welt*, 22 January 1963; cited in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 240.

What eventually killed the MLF was opposition from the United Kingdom and France. The British were reluctant to sacrifice their preferred position within the alliance with respect to nuclear weapons. They were also wary of West German aspirations for a national nuclear deterrent.

The French were reluctant to sacrifice autonomy in the area of nuclear weapons; they did not trust the American nuclear guarantee. The French went to great lengths to prevent the West Germans from gaining nuclear control through an American-led multilateral force. Most specifically, they threatened to disrupt reunification efforts by fueling fears of a German national nuclear deterrent.

These French efforts gave support to domestic criticism of the government's Atlanticist emphasis. The West German "Gaullists" were unwilling to alienate France to gain more German influence over U.S. nuclear weapons; they preferred a "European deterrent." Paradoxically, the French never agreed to the sacrifice of autonomy required to include the West Germans in a European deterrent.

Internal opposition existed to what was perceived as the government's "nuclear obsession" and its effects on Germany's eventual re-unification. How could a Germany with control of nuclear weapons hope to reconcile its differences

with the East and reunify? Chancellor Erhard attempted to address this question in a Bundestag Speech:

We are thinking in terms of a joint nuclear organization, and we are participating in relevant deliberations with allied powers. We have repeatedly made known that we do not desire national control of nuclear weapons.

We should, however, not be kept out of any nuclear participation simply because we are a divided country. The partition of Germany is an injustice. It must not be augmented by another injustice, by making it more difficult for us--who are rendering substantial contributions to the Western alliance--to defend ourselves against the open threat from the East. Such views weaken the alliance and simultaneously encourage the Soviets to insist on the partition of our continent.<sup>61</sup>

Despite Erhard's efforts, MLF was not to be. Allied opposition combined with internal opposition in the Federal Republic to kill the proposal. In the end, the Americans were unwilling to force the issue enough to give it the momentum required to overcome the opposition. The United States was reluctant to alienate either the French or the British with dominating overtures in support of the proposal.

### 3. NPG and NPT: 1966-1969

The fall of 1966 brought another change in the German leadership, and with it a change in direction. The CDU/CSU-SPD Grand Coalition set the wheels

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<sup>61</sup>*Bulletin* (official English-language publication of the Press and Information Office of the Federal Government), 16 November 1965; cited in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 261.

in motion for the Federal Republic's *Ostpolitik*. Although the Grand Coalition was constrained by its inability to obtain a consensus on several important issues, there were a few accomplishments related to nuclear policy during these three years.

The first major development in West German nuclear policy during this period was the alliance's decision to formally adopt the strategy of flexible response. Formal adoption of flexible response did not quell controversy on nuclear strategy within the alliance, but an agreement was reached on the requirement to emphasize a conventional force buildup.

The most effective avenue to address the divergent interests in nuclear policy within the alliance was the Nuclear Planning Group (NPG). The NPG was instituted after the failure of the MLF and conducted its first meeting in April 1967. The West Germans gained a greater appreciation for American nuclear concerns while reexamining the rationality of strategic doctrine from the West German perspective. The NPG provided the West Germans an alliance forum for debate on nuclear issues. As one West German participant, General Ulrich de Maizière, put it:

The non-nuclear European states obtained knowledge of data not previously available to them, as well as the knowledge of the technical conditions for the employment of atomic weapons. They became better acquainted with American security interests and American thinking. In turn, the Americans were confronted afresh with European views and concerns. They deepened their understanding of Europe's differing conditions and for the special

problems of countries that possessed a common border with Warsaw Pact nations.<sup>62</sup>

The primary result of this NPG debate was a report on the early use of nuclear weapons known as the Healey-Schröder paper, after the defense ministers of Britain and West Germany. The European compromise on flexible response stressing a conventional buildup had heightened apprehension about the value of the U.S. nuclear guarantee. This paper attempted to cement allied defense strategy to the U.S. nuclear guarantee through the early, but limited use of nuclear weapons.

Schröder used this report as a vehicle to express West German views on the early use of nuclear weapons, their interdependence with conventional forces, and their role in forward defense. He reiterated these ideas in a speech to the Western European Union (WEU) stating that it was "in the European interest that, should the necessity arise, tactical [nuclear] weapons are used in good time."<sup>63</sup> Addressing the conventional issue, Schröder argued "that in our view there is an inseparable interdependence between conventional forces and

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<sup>62</sup>Ulrich de Maizière, *Armed Forces in the NATO Alliance* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, Georgetown University, May 1976), 31; cited in Stromseth, pp. 186-187.

<sup>63</sup>Gerhard Schröder, "Speech to the Assembly of the Western European Union," *Proceedings of the Assembly of the Western European Union, Fourteenth Ordinary Session, First Part, II: Minutes and Official Report of Debates, October 1968*, 200; cited in Ivo Daalder, *The Nature and Practice of Flexible Response* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 73.



tactical nuclear forces."<sup>64</sup> Although these ideas were intended to prevent a conventional conflict confined to Western Europe, Schröder was cognizant of the effects of tactical nuclear weapons confined to Europe. He argued for a limited use of nuclear weapons "as far forward as possible in order to avoid loss--and devastation--of NATO territory."<sup>65</sup>

In an attempt to accommodate the SPD's position within the Grand Coalition, the government modified its official stance towards the NPT. The NPT debate began in West Germany as early as 1965 in conjunction with the MLF. The NPT and the MLF were linked by their common aim: to stem nuclear proliferation. Before the Grand Coalition gained control of the government, the Christian Democrats were wary of any efforts to infringe on civilian nuclear programs.

When the SPD entered the Grand Coalition, this position softened. The SPD supported the NPT as the best way to achieve reunification; it would assure the East by confirming that the Federal Republic did not intend to pursue a national nuclear weapons program. More conservative forces in the coalition were less willing to sacrifice the option of a future national nuclear deterrent, or

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<sup>64</sup>Schröder, WEU Speech, 201; cited in Daalder, 74.

<sup>65</sup>Schröder, WEU Speech, 200; cited in Daalder, 74.

the prospects for a European deterrent. In the end, an SPD-FDP government coalition in 1969 decided to adhere to the NPT.

#### D. 1970-1979

The 1970-1979 period in the nuclear policy of the Federal Republic was marked by the dominance of the SPD--first under the leadership of Willy Brandt (1969-1974), followed by Helmut Schmidt (1974-1982). Helmut Schmidt's influence on nuclear weapons policy is unparalleled in the history of the Federal Republic; with the possible exception of Franz Josef Strauss, no other West German politician has had a greater impact on nuclear strategy. First as defense minister in 1969-1972 and then as chancellor in 1974-1982, Helmut Schmidt dominated West German nuclear weapons policy.

##### 1. NPT and *Ostpolitik*: 1970-1974

Willy Brandt was not a primary figure in the development of the Federal Republic's nuclear weapons policy. Nevertheless, as foreign minister in 1966-1969 and as chancellor in 1969-1974, Brandt's major contribution was his *Ostpolitik*, his work to improve West Germany's relation with the Warsaw Pact countries.

In late November 1969, as one of the first major actions by his government, Willy Brandt signed the NPT. In his memoirs Brandt summarized his views on the treaty:

First, I did not want national access to nuclear weapons, and the bulk of my countrymen agreed that we had no need of them; secondly, Europe must not be defenceless in face of a continuing threat; and, thirdly, we must have a say in matters that affected, or might affect, our interests.<sup>66</sup>

Brandt was addressing his concerns about the Federal Republic's security as a non-nuclear power. According to Brandt, the Federal Republic required a continuing nuclear guarantee from NATO and the United States, and a level of influence in alliance decisions commensurate with its contribution.

For many in the SPD, signing the treaty created an environment more conducive to East-West détente and successful pursuit of the SPD's preferred *Ostpolitik*. Christian Democratic Union/Christian Socialist Union (CDU/CSU) opposition to both the NPT and *Ostpolitik* continued, and the SPD would have to wait until 1975, "after *Ostpolitik* had become an accepted part of West German foreign policy, to achieve formal West German ratification of the NPT."<sup>67</sup>

In 1969, Helmut Schmidt became Minister of Defense and immediately pursued an evaluation of West German nuclear doctrine. As early as 1961, Schmidt had been critical of NATO's reliance on rapid escalation to meet a conventional threat.

The thesis of the inevitability of nuclear defense is deadly nonsense. . . .  
Actual defense against nonnuclear (conventional) attack in Europe with

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<sup>66</sup>Willy Brandt, *People and Politics*, trans. J. Maxwell Brownjohn (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1976), 189.

<sup>67</sup>Boutwell, pp. 45-46.

tactical nuclear weapons would . . . most probably be synonymous with large-scale destruction of Europe, at least . . . of Germany.<sup>68</sup>

In light of these feelings, Schmidt instituted a doctrinal change in German nuclear strategy first formulated in his 1970 White Paper. Nuclear weapons in Europe "must not be used except as a last resort and even then only with restraint and on a selective basis."<sup>69</sup>

Most nuclear policy developments during Brandt's rule as Chancellor can be attributed to Schmidt. Nevertheless, Brandt left a mark on the security policy of the Federal Republic which lingered for two decades. Brandt had achieved gains in improved relations with the East which would remain a cherished accomplishment for future governments. "Indeed, the very existence of foreign policy achievements in the East meant that the Soviets would enjoy, and seek to capitalize on, an increased leverage over West German policymaking."<sup>70</sup> This paradox was destined to create havoc for future nuclear weapons policy in the Federal Republic.

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<sup>68</sup>Helmut Schmidt, *Vertidigung oder Vergeltung*, 1961; cited in Helmut Schmidt, *Men and Powers: A Political Retrospective*, Trans. Ruth Hein (New York: Random House, 1989), pp. 111-112.

<sup>69</sup>The 1970 Defense White Paper, English edition, 42; cited in Kelleher, *Germany and Nuclear Weapons*, 304.

<sup>70</sup>Boutwell, 50.

## 2. End of Détente, Roots of INF: 1975-1979

By 1975, détente was losing some of its charm with the superpowers. This presented the West Germans with difficulties in the execution of their security policy. Balancing the requirements of *Ostpolitik*, arms control, and security became a complex task for Chancellor Schmidt. It is significant that disagreements within the SPD about how to reconcile these three priorities produced circumstances which brought down the government of Helmut Schmidt in 1982.

Helmut Schmidt's first White paper of 1975/1976 set the tone for the nuclear weapons policy of his administration. It outlined the value of forward defense, and specified the conditions for the early use of nuclear weapons.

The initial tactical use of nuclear weapons must be timed as late as possible but as early as necessary, which is to say that the doctrine of Forward Defence must retain its validity, the conventional forces of the defender must not be exhausted, and incalculability must be sustained so far as the attacker is concerned. The initial use of nuclear weapons is not intended so much to bring about a military decision as to achieve political effect. The intent is to persuade the attacker to reconsider his intention, to desist in his aggression, and to withdraw.<sup>71</sup>

With these guidelines, Schmidt was attempting to provide deterrence with a connection to the U.S. guarantee without confining the conflict to Western Europe.

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<sup>71</sup>White Paper 1975/1976: *The Security of the Federal Republic of Germany and the Development of the Federal Armed Forces* (Bonn: Federal Minister of Defence), 20.



In the mid-1970s, developments in the Warsaw Pact began to threaten Schmidt's goals. NATO began to notice significant growth in Warsaw Pact forces which was incompatible with the declared objectives of détente.<sup>72</sup> With respect to nuclear forces these improvements were expressed in the deployment of the SS-20 mobile intermediate range missile. With multiple warheads, increased accuracy, and longer range this missile was capable of conducting nuclear strikes throughout the Federal Republic and all of Europe. Helmut Schmidt was concerned about the political and military implications of this weapon system.

I was fed up with Brzezinski and Carter who had told me that the Russian SS-20s did not matter at all . . . they didn't understand that the SS-20 was a political threat, political blackmail against Germany most of all and later on against others in Europe.<sup>73</sup>

In London, in October 1977, Helmut Schmidt gave a speech at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) in which he addressed his fears about the SS-20's capabilities. Schmidt expressed concern that the Carter administration's emphasis on SALT and arms control would achieve superpower parity at the strategic level while retaining an INF<sup>74</sup> imbalance in Europe. The

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<sup>72</sup>Jeffrey Herf, *War By Other Means: Soviet Power, West German Resistance, and the Battle of the Euromissiles* (New York: The Free Press, 1991), 53.

<sup>73</sup>Helmut Schmidt, interview with Jeffrey Herf, New York, September 30, 1985; cited in Herf, 54.

<sup>74</sup>The term intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) replaced long-range theater nuclear forces (LRTNF) in the early 1980s. For the purposes of this study, INF will be used throughout. See David S. Yost, "The History of NATO Theater

United States would be more reluctant to escalate to the strategic level as its superiority waned, while Soviet advantages in Europe would encourage aggression. Schmidt sensed a lack of U.S. appreciation of the West German strategic situation, and a resultant de-coupling of the American nuclear guarantee.

This situation was exacerbated by the "neutron bomb" controversy. The neutron bomb, or enhanced radiation weapon (ERW), was a U.S. artillery shell containing a discriminate nuclear weapon that would cause limited collateral damage. ERWs with reduced blast and increased prompt radiation effects were considered suitable for paralysing concentrated tank formations.

In the Federal Republic the debate on ERW was fierce and emotional. Helmut Schmidt was always critical of this aspect of West German strategic culture. He complained of "the widespread tendency in the Federal Republic to judge military matters from an emotional standpoint and to shy away from penetrating, complex, and rational consideration of the situation."<sup>75</sup>

Although the government attempted to highlight the potential tactical advantages of nuclear weapons with reduced blast, it faced emotional challenges

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Nuclear Force Policy: Key Findings from the Sandia Conference," *Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol.15 No.2 (June 1992), pp. 235-236.

<sup>75</sup>Helmut Schmidt, *Defense or Retaliation: A German View* (New York: Praeger, 1962), 98; cited in Sherri L. Wasserman, *The Neutron Bomb Controversy* (New York: Praeger, 1983), 66.

from the left. The most damaging of these attacks came from the "intellectual architect of détente,"<sup>76</sup> Egon Bahr:

Reduced to simple formula this is a weapon which causes no, or only slight, material damage, but "cleanly" kills man. This is to be the final progress? Is mankind about to go crazy? . . . The neutron bomb is a symbol of the perversion of thought.<sup>77</sup>

Beyond these emotional arguments, there was a strategy-oriented policy debate on the possible deployment of ERW in the Federal Republic. The CDU/CSU argued that ERW would enhance deterrence. Because of their limited effects, the weapons would be more usable, reducing NATO's self-deterrence.<sup>78</sup> The SPD argued that ERW would make nuclear weapons likely to be used sooner in a conflict and confine nuclear war to Europe.<sup>79</sup> The SPD was also concerned about sacrificing the gains of détente with a show of muscle.

The volatile nature of this issue required careful handling by Chancellor Schmidt. He presented the government position as one committed to a multilateral stance developed by NATO in the context of arms control measures.

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<sup>76</sup>Wasserman, 67.

<sup>77</sup>Egon Bahr, "Ist die Menschheit dabei, verrückt zu werden? Die Neutronenbombe ist ein Symbol der Perversion des Denkens," *Vorwärts*, no. 29, July 21, 1977, 4; cited in Herf, 61.

<sup>78</sup>David S. Yost and Thomas C. Glad, "West German Party Politics and Theater Nuclear Modernization Since 1977," *Armed Forces and Society* Vol.8 No.4 (Summer 1982): 530.

<sup>79</sup>*Ibid.*, 531.

In his address to the Bundestag on April 13, 1978, the chancellor made clear his preference for the sequence of events to be followed concerning ERW:

(1) a unilateral production decision by the United States; (2) the attempt at an arms control solution; and (3) if no arms control solution were forthcoming within two years, then the FRG would be willing to station neutron weapons, provided the Alliance decided such deployment was necessary and provided another NATO country also deployed ERW.<sup>80</sup>

This position was difficult politically due to opposition to nuclear modernization within his own party and the criticism from the CDU/CSU opposition that he was not sufficiently supporting the Americans.

Everything came to a head when President Carter decided to cancel ERW production. "Carter had pushed the West Europeans out onto a limb in getting them to agree to the NATO ERW compromise, only to saw the limb off behind them."<sup>81</sup> This intra-allied debacle would strongly influence future security arrangements. It exemplified a lack of U.S. leadership and a lack of allied communication and understanding.

Attempting to prevent further problems in alliance decision-making, the Carter administration promoted greater alliance participation in nuclear policy. The ERW debacle also transformed traditional U.S. opposition to the modernization of INF in Europe. Although much of the initiative to deploy

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<sup>80</sup>*Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographischer Berichte, 83 Sitzung, April 13, 1978; cited in Boutwell, 102.*

<sup>81</sup>Boutwell, pp. 104-105.

modernized INF in Europe came from the Federal Republic, establishing a domestic consensus proved problematic. The INF issue "posed a classical dilemma between the conflicting demands of defense and détente."<sup>82</sup>

This balancing act required Schmidt to place certain conditions on West Germany's position with respect to INF. The first of these was that at least one other non-nuclear continental European power would agree to deploy missiles. This non-singularity condition was a common theme for the Federal Republic. Schmidt refused to have a special status imposed, since as one West German politician explained, "we do not want to give anyone, East or West, any reason to suspect that Germany is gaining increased access to the nuclear trigger, and those suspicions are easy to provoke."<sup>83</sup> The Germans also promoted the requirement of a unanimous allied decision and the priority of arms control negotiations.

The arms control track for the Federal Republic had a special meaning. Pressure within the party had forced Schmidt to propose a zero option: successful

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<sup>82</sup>Lunn, Simon, *The Modernization of NATO's Long-range Theater Nuclear Forces*, Report prepared for the Subcommittee on Europe and the Middle East of the Committee on Foreign Affairs by the Foreign Affairs and National Defense Division, Congressional Research Service. 96th Cong., 2d Sess., 31 December 1980; cited in Daalder, 183.

<sup>83</sup>U.S. Congress, Senate, *SALT and the NATO Allies*. A staff report to the Subcommittee on European Affairs, Committee on Foreign Relations 96th Cong., 1st Sess., October 1979; cited in Daalder, 184.



arms control could avert the need for any missile deployment. As Peter Corterier, an SPD parliamentarian, emphasized, the INF decision should aim "at a stable nuclear balance of power and at closing any gaps in our deterrent capability in Europe. Where this can be achieved with arms control arrangements, this should take priority over the introduction of new weapons systems."<sup>84</sup> NATO's dual-track decision in December 1979 reflected these West German conditions. The dual-track decision marked the beginning of a traumatic period for nuclear weapons policy in the Federal Republic.

#### E. 1980-1989

The 1980s saw the end of SPD dominance of nuclear security policy and the emergence of Helmut Kohl and the CDU/CSU. The INF debate destroyed Schmidt's political consensus as the SPD drifted too far left for many West Germans. It required a CDU/CSU-led government to complete the INF process that Schmidt began. In the great tradition of Adenauer, Helmut Kohl used this position of strength to carry the Federal Republic's security policy through the destruction of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and reunification in 1990.

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<sup>84</sup>U.S. Congress, House, *Western Security Issues: European Perspectives*. Hearing before the Subcommittees on International Security and Scientific Affairs and Europe and the Middle East. Committee on Foreign Affairs. 96th cong., 1st Sess., 12 September 1979, 16; cited in Daalder, 203.

Discussion of this period is divided into two sections. The first is dominated by the INF debate and concludes in 1983. The second section follows the aftermath of INF to the breaking of the Berlin Wall in November 1989.

### 1. The INF Debate: 1980-1983

The essence of NATO's two-track decision in December 1979 was four years of arms control negotiations to alleviate the European INF imbalance. If these negotiations failed, missile deployment would follow in late 1983. For the Federal Republic, these four years were filled with divisive public debate in the Bundestag, among intellectuals, and in the streets.

The government and more conservative forces justified the two track decision as a means to couple European theater nuclear forces to the American strategic deterrent. Soviet strategic parity combined with INF superiority in Europe threatened the Western Europeans with nuclear blackmail. If the imbalance could not be rectified through negotiations, Western missile deployments were required to convince Soviet strategic planners that they could not isolate Europe from the United States strategic guarantee.

Members of the CDU/CSU opposition supported the government's position, but cautioned against a neutral drift within the SPD. Franz Josef Strauss warned, "detente must not be allowed to contribute to a political-psychological

neutralization or to a dismantling of the will for defense."<sup>85</sup> Strauss was alluding to a perceived trend on the part of a faction of the SPD to emphasize détente over defense.

Examples of this trend can be drawn from the opposition to the NATO decision. Numerous initiatives from peace movements concentrated on the dangers of nuclear war. Others directed blame against the Americans for allegedly increasing East-West tensions and supposedly attempting to confine nuclear war to Europe. This growing revolt within the SPD was addressed by Helmut Schmidt as follows:

He who neglects the balance of forces is an illusionist who endangers the peace. . . . With all my force, I will work against a policy of inferiority and against a policy of Western superiority. . . . You must finally stop acting as if the Americans were our enemies and the Russians our friends. . . . There is no reason to believe that we would be better off under the "protection" of a communist dictatorship than we are at present.<sup>86</sup>

Additional INF opposition forces began to draw the SPD into a more neutral position. These groups underscored West Germany's unique position and status in relation to the nuclear superpowers. Günter Grass highlighted the special responsibility of the two German states in promoting peace and

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<sup>85</sup>Franz Josef Strauss, *Deutscher Bundestag--8 Wahlperiode--196 Sitzung* (January 17, 1980), 15613; cited in Herf, 118.

<sup>86</sup>Helmut Schmidt, "Damit stehe und fall ich," *Vorwärts*, no.22, May 21, 1981, 5; cited in Herf, pp. 125-126.

disarmament.<sup>87</sup> Egon Bahr emphasized West Germany's sovereign interests as a non-nuclear power, promoting the slogan "no nuclear weapons for non-nuclear states."<sup>88</sup>

Similar to the *Kampf dem Atomtod* in the late fifties, during the INF controversy, the protest movement took its message to the streets. In 1981 protest movements organized massive rallies with hundreds of thousands in attendance all over West Germany and much of the rest of Western Europe.<sup>89</sup> This was followed by passive resistance in the form of "tax resistance, fasts and hunger strikes, and nonviolent encirclement of NATO and U.S. military installations" in 1982 and 1983.<sup>90</sup>

Domestic political difficulties combined with fears of a divided and neutral SPD forced Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and his Free Democratic Party (FDP) to switch allegiance and form a government with the CDU/CSU. The new governing coalition under CDU/CSU leadership took the lead with the INF issue in the fall of 1982, confirming their public mandate in the

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<sup>87</sup>Ingrid Krüger, ed., *Berliner Begegnung zur Friedensförderung: Protokolle des Schriftstellertreffens am 13./14. Dezember 1981* (Neuwied und Darmstadt: Luchterhand, 1982) pp. 45-46; cited in Herf, 146.

<sup>88</sup>Herf, pp. 149,154.

<sup>89</sup>Boutwell, 149.

<sup>90</sup>*Ibid.*, 149.

general election of March 1983. Debate continued on the same lines from both camps throughout 1983, culminating in the final arguments presented prior to the decisive vote in the Bundestag in November 1983.

It was clear at this point that the SPD had rejected Schmidt's decision of 1979, and in the process had destroyed chances for a negotiated solution. The Soviets had no reason to make concessions at the negotiating table when a large portion of the West German opposition did not support INF deployment. The SPD and the Greens had inadvertently played into the hands of the Soviets by advocating a neutralization of the West German security position and steering the Federal Republic away from the Western alliance.

The government presented its arguments with an extensive description of the INF issue in the 1983 White Paper published just prior to the final Bundestag debate. The White Paper included an extensive evaluation of the Soviet threat and of the implications of this threat for the West German security situation.

The situation of NATO has become more difficult: the Warsaw Pact's growing conventional superiority in Europe has increased NATO's dependence on the timely introduction of overseas reinforcements and on the nuclear component of the deterrent.

At the same time, the credibility of the nuclear deterrence has become more problematic owing both to the increasing superiority of the Soviet Union in intermediate-range and short-range nuclear weapons in Europe and to the decreasing acceptance of nuclear weapons in Western societies. If these two unfavorable trends continue they will seriously jeopardize the



credibility of our deterrent and defence posture and critically aggravate our security situation.<sup>91</sup>

The SPD developed its final position in a conference just prior to the Bundestag debate. The Social Democrats asserted that not all avenues had been pursued in the negotiation process. The SPD rejected accusations that it was neutralist, and argued that the West German position on security issues diverged from that of the nuclear superpowers.<sup>92</sup> In short, the SPD rejected increasing the number of nuclear weapons deployed on German soil. In the opinion of many members of the SPD, nuclear weapons which could quickly reach the Soviet Union from German soil jeopardized the accomplishments of *Ostpolitik*. Although Helmut Schmidt pleaded against reversing his decision, the SPD voted against deployment.

Helmut Kohl rallied the more conservative coalition under the Adenauer banner of strong connections to the West. Reducing the issue to an almost ideological conflict against dictatorships, Kohl led the Federal Republic to full implementation of the two track decision of 1979.

Those who are weak encourage hegemonical claims and call forth threats. They expose themselves to blackmail and place at risk their freedom and thus also peace. Only the determination of free peoples can show

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<sup>91</sup>*White Paper 1983: The Security of the Federal Republic of Germany* (Bonn: The Federal Minister of Defense), 111.

<sup>92</sup>Herf, 205.

totalitarian states their limits. We can never allow peace and freedom to be played off against one another.<sup>93</sup>

## 2. Aftermath, Including the Reykjavik Summit and the INF Treaty:

1983-1989

A major facet of the INF struggle's aftermath was the significant Soviet role. The Soviets had grand designs in Western Europe, as pointed out by the head of the Planning Department in the West German Foreign Ministry, Konrad Seitz:

The threat engendered by Soviet over-armament is not only of a military nature. It is also of a politico-psychological nature. The Soviet weapons are intended to project a political shadow, and in actual fact do project this shadow over Europe. Today the primary danger in Europe is not aggression and open warfare. *We risk rather to see permanently modified, to the advantage of the Soviet Union, the force balances in Europe and the world.* At the end of this process, the European democracies would see themselves constrained to self-neutralization. *The Soviet Union would have won political control over Western Europe without having had to fire a shot.*[Emphasis added.]<sup>94</sup>

In David Yost's assessment, the Soviet efforts did not achieve their main goals during the INF affair in West Germany, but nonetheless contributed

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<sup>93</sup>Helmut Kohl, *Deutscher Bundestag--10 Wahlperiode--35 Sitzung*, (November 21, 1983), 2331; cited in Herf, 207.

<sup>94</sup>Konrad Seitz, "Deutsch-französische sicherheitspolitische Zusammenarbeit," *Europa-Archiv*, 37(25 November 1982): 663; cited in David S. Yost, "The Soviet Campaign against INF in West Germany," chap. in Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker, eds., *Soviet Strategic Deception*, (Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath and Company/Lexington Books, 1987), 344.

to significant developments.<sup>95</sup> The Soviets helped to polarize and undermine the previous political consensus on defense policy. During this period the SPD moved away from key NATO policies. The Soviets were probably influential in the delegitimization of NATO nuclear policy with respect to the U.S. nuclear presence in Western Europe and the Western approach to nuclear arms control. The Soviets also contributed to a socialization process for members of the successor generations in West Germany; many members of the younger generations became more skeptical about the reality of the Soviet threat.

The Soviet Union was not immune to the effects of the INF affair. Although the Soviets walked out on the negotiations in 1983, the reality of NATO alliance resolve obliged them to return to the negotiating table in 1985. One major stepping stone in this negotiating process was the Reykjavik summit in 1986. The superpowers made some progress towards an agreement eliminating INF in Europe and spoke of the eventual elimination of all nuclear weapons. In the opinion of many West European experts and officials, too much progress was made in the wrong direction without any prior consultation.

Chancellor Kohl reacted quite negatively to the developments at Reykjavik. Talk of eliminating nuclear weapons challenged the very essence of the primacy of nuclear deterrence professed by the CDU/CSU leadership. In

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<sup>95</sup>The remainder of this paragraph is indebted to the chapter by David S. Yost, "The Soviet Campaign against INF in West Germany."

meetings with President Reagan after the summit, Kohl reminded the president that "the NATO strategy of flexible response would be deprived of its credibility unless, in connection with the question of strategic missiles the issue of Soviet superiority in the conventional field is put on the table at the same time."<sup>96</sup> Defense Minister Manfred Wörner was reluctant to include German owned Pershing-I missiles in the treaty negotiations.<sup>97</sup> These initial reservations from Bonn eventually subsided with pressure from the allies. With assurances on future negotiations for shorter-range intermediate-range nuclear forces (SRINF), Bonn finally accepted the INF treaty. The Federal Republic agreed to dismantle and withdraw the Pershing-I missiles after the implementation of the INF treaty.

The INF treaty was not popular with many West German officials, politicians, and experts. As Ronald Asmus explains:

Leading West German conservatives feared that the "double zero" agreement had produced a situation where the remaining nuclear systems on West German soil were decoupling, where the FRG remained vulnerable to massive Soviet superiority in short-range systems, and where future modernization of nuclear weapons on German soil would be politically more difficult in the wake of INF. . . . These trends have only strengthened convictions that the *status quo*, in terms of nuclear systems stationed in the FRG, is neither desirable nor tenable; that pressures for further reductions are likely to increase rather than decrease; and that Bonn must act to control

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<sup>96</sup>"Kohl Doubtful on Missile Treaty, Urges Talks on Conventional Forces," *Boston Globe*, 23 October 1986; cited in Daalder, 253.

<sup>97</sup>Daalder, 257.



this process and steer it in a direction that better corresponds to German military and political interests.<sup>98</sup>

Chancellor Kohl reacted to this sentiment by more aggressively asserting West Germany's interests with respect to nuclear policy. He pushed hard for negotiations on SRINF, conventional forces, and chemical weapons. Kohl postponed decisions on the modernization of nuclear forces to avoid sending the wrong signal in an atmosphere of disarmament.<sup>99</sup> A final example of Bonn's assertiveness was Kohl's reaction during the WINTEX exercise of March 1989. West German participants in this exercise stalled at a crucial juncture when the U.S. reportedly refused to change a targeting plan in which nuclear weapons were targeted on West German soil. In the exercise a follow-on nuclear strike was proposed to stop a Soviet conventional advance. In this strike some of the nuclear weapons were targeted on West German soil and West German participants stalled the proceedings, apparently under the orders of Chancellor Kohl, in order to avoid the need for a decision.<sup>100</sup> This episode underscored Bonn's growing reluctance to sacrifice important interests and its determination to assert its own policy preferences in alliance decision-making.

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<sup>98</sup>Ronald Asmus, "West Germany Faces Nuclear Modernization," *Survival* Vol.30 (Nov/Dec 1988): 502.

<sup>99</sup>Daalder, 278.

<sup>100</sup>"Der Iwan kommt--und feste druff," *Der Spiegel*, 1 May 1989; cited in Daalder, pp.92-93.



## F. CONCLUSION

The analysis of the role of nuclear deterrence in West German security policy over the last four decades has highlighted continuities which may apply to the post-Cold War environment as well. The Federal Republic will continue to assert its national interests within a multi-lateral framework, avoiding the political drawbacks of singularization. German security policy will continue to balance the European and transatlantic partnerships while avoiding the drawbacks of a national nuclear deterrent.

The Federal Republic made quite a transition in security policy--from a position of complete reliance on allied support in 1949, when it was founded, to a more self-confident posture as the Berlin wall was crumbling in 1989. The West Germans had grudgingly adopted flexible response in 1967, cautiously accepted plans for the deployment of the neutron bomb in 1978, and ambivalently approved the double-zero agreement on INF in 1987.<sup>101</sup> By 1988, the Federal Republic began to assert itself more openly within the alliance and was no longer willing to sacrifice German interests quietly.

In the forty years of West German nuclear policy, certain common themes stand out. First and foremost, West Germans have generally expressed an aversion to a national nuclear deterrent. Throughout West Germany's past, the

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<sup>101</sup>Daalder, 283.

gains of an autonomous deterrent force have never outweighed the probable losses. Living under the umbrella of NATO's nuclear guarantee, primarily provided by the United States, has been difficult at times, but effective.

When formulating security policy, the Federal Republic was forced to delicately balance the interests of its European neighbors with those of the United States. For the most part the West Germans were successful in this endeavor due to their powerful influence. In the rare cases when the West Germans were obliged by circumstances to make a decision between the two sides, their preference was to delay the decision for as long as possible and in the end to favor the Americans.

Another basic theme in West German nuclear policy is its emphasis on deterrence. In some respects this stems from a realization that the use of nuclear weapons in Europe would be disastrous for the Germans. The Federal Republic has continually promoted an ambiguous policy on the use of nuclear weapons in the event of a failure of deterrence. An insight into this theme was revealed by Helmut Schmidt in his memoirs; he explained his reluctance to use nuclear weapons as follows:

*As commanding officer, I was therefore fully determined to give no assistance whatever to Western escalation of nuclear warfare in the (unlikely) case of a Soviet conventional attack. Nevertheless, I thought it prudent not to say so; it was, after all, conceivable that some uncertainty*

about possible Western reaction might well have a deterrent effect on the Soviet Union.<sup>102</sup>

Another continual theme of West German nuclear policy was the difficult balance between defense and détente. The Federal Republic's security and defense policy was often at odds with the goal of reunification. The concept of non-singularity is related to this concern. West German policy-makers demanded a shared responsibility within the alliance on difficult political decisions to avoid being singled out for propaganda purposes. Bonn wished to provide West German nuclear policy a multilateral umbrella to battle the inevitable Soviet charges of a revanchist Federal Republic. Nevertheless, the core of the West German nuclear dilemma during this era was the grave risk the Federal Republic experienced from the possible use of nuclear weapons in an East-West conflict while so highly dependent on the actions and decisions of others.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup>Schmidt, *Men and Powers*, 111.

<sup>103</sup>Boutwell, 218.

### III. GERMAN PERSPECTIVES ON THE NUCLEAR DETERRENCE POLICIES OF THE UNITED KINGDOM AND FRANCE

#### A. INTRODUCTION

The future security policy of the Federal Republic is closely tied to relations with its European neighbors. The trend towards European unity, however rocky it may appear at times, raises questions about greater European cooperation in defense policy. For the Federal Republic, the question is whether this cooperation will carry over into the nuclear realm, and whether the Germans would rely on nuclear protection from West European alliance partners.

This chapter specifically addresses the West European countries with a national deterrent force: France and the United Kingdom. The text begins with a survey of the nuclear capabilities and policies of the United Kingdom and France. The chapter concludes with German perspectives on these nuclear deterrent forces.

#### B. UNITED KINGDOM

This section surveys the United Kingdom's nuclear deterrent policy. The background discussion emphasizes the decision-making behind the deterrent, several British justifications for maintaining the deterrent, the unique role that

British forces play in NATO, Britain's close relationship with and dependence on the United States, and public opinion regarding the nuclear deterrent. The section concludes with a brief overview of British nuclear forces and a discussion of Britain's domestic political debate.

## 1. Background of Deterrence

British decisions on nuclear forces are subject to limited public scrutiny. "Small groups of top-level politicians within the Cabinet, supported by a strong professional civil service, have historically been able to make critical nuclear decisions quietly."<sup>104</sup> This critical decision-making in the 1940s and 1950s led to the development of Britain's own nuclear force.

Nuclear weapons were an avenue to a "seat at the top table" for the United Kingdom from the onset. The British utilized nuclear weapons in an attempt to retain the "great power" status that was deteriorating after World War II and the independence of India. This is exemplified

in the interest the British have taken in organizing, together with the United States and the Soviet Union, nuclear arms control regimes such as the PTBT [Partial Test Ban Treaty] and the NPT [Non-Proliferation Treaty], and in the British reluctance even to consider the possibility of allowing France to be the sole [West] European nuclear power.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>104</sup>David S. Yost, *Nuclear Deterrence and Western Societies: Strategic Culture and Public Opinion in Britain, France, Germany, and the United States*, draft of 26 February 1991, 22.

<sup>105</sup>Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 22.



The British were the first "to recognize the practical possibility of building nuclear weapons, and turned to the United States for help in bringing the project to fruition."<sup>106</sup> This was the beginning of a cooperative nuclear relationship that (although severely strained at times) has continued for half a century. With this relationship the United Kingdom has "enjoyed uniquely privileged access to U.S. nuclear secrets and weapons, but [is] the only nuclear power without a [strategic] delivery system of its own [manufacture]."<sup>107</sup>

Britain's interdependence with the United States and NATO provides the British with a "special status within the alliance based on their unique roles and responsibilities."<sup>108</sup> The United Kingdom accepts the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons on British soil, plans for the potential employment of U.S. nuclear weapons in cooperation with British forces on German soil, and maintains British nuclear weapons at home and in Germany. British nuclear forces in Germany, although assigned to NATO, do not provide the extended deterrence that American forces provide. The United Kingdom is reluctant to explicitly

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<sup>106</sup>*Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>107</sup>David Reynolds, "A 'special relationship'? America, Britain and the International Order Since the Second World War," *International Affairs* Vol.62, No.1 (Winter 1985/6): 13.

<sup>108</sup>Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 23.

"acknowledge that it has made the [nuclear] commitment [to Germany] or to offer guidance on how seriously it ought to be taken."<sup>109</sup>

One aspect of this unique role is London's desire to maintain a "second-center of decision." This theory proposes that an adversary would be forced to take into account both the American and British political decision-makers when challenging NATO's nuclear resolve. As explained by the British Secretary of Defense in January 1980:

The nuclear decision, whether as a matter of retaliatory response or in another circumstance, would, of course, be no less agonising for the United Kingdom than for the United States. But it would be a decision of a separate and independent Power, and a Power whose survival in freedom might be more directly and closely threatened by aggression in Europe than that of the United States. This is where the fact of having to face two decision-makers instead of one is of such significance.

Soviet leaders would have to assess that there was a greater chance of one of them using its nuclear capability than if there were a single decision maker across the Atlantic. The risk to the Soviet Union would be inescapably higher and less calculable. This is just another way of saying that the deterrence of the Alliance as a whole would be stronger, the more credible and therefore the more effective.<sup>110</sup>

The British also justify their nuclear forces within the context of self-reliance. London is not inclined to sacrifice its autonomy under the nuclear

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<sup>109</sup>Lawrence Freedman, "Britain's Nuclear Commitment to Germany," in *British-German Defence Cooperation: Partners within the Alliance*, eds. Karl Kaiser and John Roper (London: Jane's, 1988), 186.

<sup>110</sup>*House of Commons Official Report*, Vol. 977. cols. 678-9 (24 January 1980), quoted in Freedman, 187.

umbrella of the United States. As former Prime Minister Thatcher stated, "Nuclear deterrence is the only means allowing small countries in effect to stand up to big countries . . . Historically, Great Britain [has] had occasion to stand alone."<sup>111</sup>

Critics of the British theories of self-reliance and "second-center of decision" question London's ability to take nuclear action independent of Washington. Some of these political forces would renounce nuclear weapons in the United Kingdom. Britain has a political tradition that has,

Since the nineteenth century included significant pacifist and idealist strains, manifest in the twentieth century mainly in the Liberal and Labour parties. This idealist current is prone to the belief that Britain is uniquely fitted to offer the world a moral example of restraint in military affairs, including a degree of unilateral disarmament.<sup>112</sup>

Strong public support for the British nuclear deterrent forced the Labour Party to reverse its stance on unilateral disarmament in October 1989. Seventy percent of the British favor retaining Britain's nuclear forces.<sup>113</sup>

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<sup>111</sup>BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, April 2, 1987, p.4, quoted in Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 22.

<sup>112</sup>Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 23.

<sup>113</sup>Dean Godson, "British Attitudes Toward the United States," in Martin Holmes *et al.*, *British Security Policy and the Atlantic Alliance: Prospects for the 1990s* (Washington, D.C.: Pergamon-Brassey's for the Institute for Foreign Policy Analysis, 1987), 114; quoted in Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 69.

Nevertheless, the Labour party retains a strong anti-nuclear influence with two-thirds of Labour voters favoring a non-nuclear defense policy.<sup>114</sup>

## 2. British Nuclear Forces

The United Kingdom's strategic nuclear force consists of four nuclear ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs). These submarines are planned to be replaced by a more capable fleet of four SSBNs in the mid 1990s. The British also maintain dual-capable aircraft with free-fall nuclear bombs. London intends to replace these bombs with a more credible, long range air-launched missile in the late 1990s.<sup>115</sup>

Both of these modernization programs are embroiled in controversy. Some argue that present international conditions, such as superpower disarmament, do not justify the continuation of Britain's modernization programs. The first of four planned SSBNs was unveiled in early March 1992; two more are under construction, but the fourth is in jeopardy. The missile program is a sensitive issue because there is pressure to cooperate with France on procurement, and to

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<sup>114</sup>Stephen F. Szabo, *West European Public Perceptions of Security Issues: A Survey of Attitudes in France, the FRG, Great Britain and Italy over Three Decades*, Office of Research, U.S. Information Agency, July 1988, 32-33; quoted in Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 69.

<sup>115</sup>For a more technical accounting of Western nuclear forces see David S. Yost, "Western Nuclear Force Structures," in *Nuclear Weapons and the Future of European Security*, ed. Beatrice Heuser, (London: Brassey's for the Centre for Defence Studies, Kings College, University of London, 1991).

many this implies possibly risking the "special relationship" with the United States. The cost involved with the program is significant, partly because Britain is experiencing its worst recession since the 1930s.

### 3. Domestic Political Debate

The debate over nuclear deterrence gained new momentum in the United Kingdom with the elections of 9 April 1992. The opposition Labour Party used the SSBN modernization as an issue against the governing Conservative Party.<sup>116</sup> Emotional issues such as international arms control and shipyard workers losing jobs set the tone for the domestic political debate on the future of nuclear weapons in the United Kingdom.

#### *a. Conservative Party*

The British government, as presently constituted, supports the continued modernization of the United Kingdom's strategic and sub-strategic forces. The British Defence Secretary summarized the party's position in a proposal to the House of Commons:

That this House supports unequivocally the concept of nuclear deterrence and the retention of a credible United Kingdom nuclear deterrent, while other countries have, or seek to acquire, nuclear weapons; note the great dangers apparent in the increase in the number of countries gaining or seeking to gain, access to nuclear weapons; understands that the country's nuclear deterrent remains essential for the defence of the United Kingdom

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<sup>116</sup>Alexander MacLeod, "Britain's Nuclear Deterrent Questioned by Opposition as US, Russia Make Cuts," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 30 January 1992, 3.



and NATO; recognizes the vital contribution to world peace which the United Kingdom's nuclear forces have made, and will continue to make, through deterrence; and supports NATO's policy of also maintaining an up-to-date, sub-strategic nuclear capability based in Europe.<sup>117</sup>

The conflicts between the Conservatives and the opposition arise in the details of the modernization plans. The new SSBNs have the capability to increase the number of warheads carried over their predecessors. The government plans to increase the warheads, but not to the maximum number capable for each missile. "This expression of self-restraint . . . may be partly explained by cost factors and by a desire to make it clear that Britain has no interest in pursuing disproportionate strategic ambitions."<sup>118</sup>

An atmosphere of restricting strategic ambitions has placed the requirement for the fourth British SSBN into question, at least in some opposition circles. The government is, however, not inclined to cancel its order for the fourth SSBN. The Conservatives stress the requirement for four boats to maintain a viable deterrent. Cancelling the fourth boat would also jeopardize four thousand jobs in a crucial voting district for their party.<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>117</sup>*Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) (Commons)*. Vol. 201, no. 39 (14 January 1992), columns 817-818.

<sup>118</sup>Yost, *Western Nuclear Force Structures*, 26-27.

<sup>119</sup>MacLeod, 3.

The present government plans for sub-strategic modernization are also a point of contention with the opposition. The government is concerned about the deterrent effect of outdated weapons. London values sub-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe for their flexibility of response. The British government has indicated that air-launched stand-off missiles may provide the appropriate form of modernization for Britain's contribution to NATO's sub-strategic forces.<sup>120</sup> Defense Minister Malcolm Rifkind recently indicated that the United Kingdom may be considering alternative replacements in the sub-strategic nuclear realm, possibly in the form of single-shot, single-warhead possibilities for Trident SLBMs.<sup>121</sup>

#### ***b. Labour Party***

The mainstream view of the Labour party with respect to nuclear weapons is a bit ambiguous. Owing perhaps to the political weight of the anti-nuclear members, the party's policy is vague. The Labour policy is based on

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<sup>120</sup>Paragraphs 6 and 9 of "Deterrence after the INF Treaty," United Kingdom Ministry of Defence *Statement of the Defence Estimates 1989*.

<sup>121</sup>Rifkind refers to alternatives in Michael Witt, "British Nukes Decision Will Not Affect TASM," *Defense News*, 22-28 June 1992, 10; Trident alternatives are from Nick Cook, "R.N. Probes Tactical Role For Trident," *Janes Defence Weekly*, 9 May 1992, 789 and U.K. Parliament, *Official Report (Commons)*, 20 May 1992, Vol. 208, column 187.

arms control and reduction negotiations involving the eight nuclear powers, a strengthened and extended nuclear non-proliferation treaty backed by sanctions, [and] a comprehensive test-ban treaty.<sup>122</sup>

In this proposal there is no specific mention of the Labour party's position on the modernization of the strategic and sub-strategic nuclear weapons.

In January 1992, however,

Labour's foreign affairs spokesman, Gerald Kaufman, speaking after Bush's [January 1992] State of the Union address, confirmed that if his party wins the general election . . . it will review Britain's Trident program.<sup>123</sup>

In the spirit of further reductions the opposition is unwilling to increase the number of warheads carried by the Trident missiles. As articulated by a Liberal Democrat<sup>124</sup> (a position supported by the Labour Party):

If Polaris currently provides an effective contribution to minimum deterrence within NATO, why is it necessary to increase the number of warheads available with Trident by what may be a factor of three?<sup>125</sup>

The opposition perceives a program that will increase Britain's nuclear capability as hypocritical at a time when Britain is combatting proliferation.

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<sup>122</sup>Gerald Kaufman, in *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) (Commons)*. Vol. 201, no. 39 (14 January 1992), column 829.

<sup>123</sup>MacLeod, 3.

<sup>124</sup>The Liberal Democrats are an alternative opposition party that may gain fifteen percent of the electorate and play a crucial role in a stalemate election.

<sup>125</sup>Menzies Campbell, *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) (Commons)*. Vol. 201, no. 39 (14 January 1992), column 853.

The opposition appears to be even less supportive of the proposed air-launched stand-off missile. The missile program has not progressed as far as the Trident program. It may be difficult to justify committing to the missile program in these times of fiscal constraint. "A Labour Government might choose to keep the Trident programme on the grounds that it had gone beyond the point of no return, and cancel the possibility of an air-launched system as a concession to its anti-nuclear supporters."<sup>126</sup>

The Labour party has a vocal and influential anti-nuclear constituency. The controversy within the Labour party has been mentioned by the British Secretary of State for Defence in debate; Tom King quoted a journalist, Martin Jacques, as follows:

The Labour party has virtually abstained from the post cold war debate on defence. Paralysed by the memory of the 1983 and 1987 elections, its only concern is to reassure. Labour does not want a defence debate: the very mention of defence sends it running for cover.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>126</sup>Yost, *Western Nuclear Force Structures*, 27-28.

<sup>127</sup>Martin Jacques, quoted by Secretary of State for Defence Tom King in *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) (Commons)*. Vol. 201, no. 39 (14 January 1992), column 826.

According to Martin Holmes' analysis, the Conservative party has been quite successful in portraying the Labour opposition as soft on defense in recent elections.<sup>128</sup>

The anti-nuclear constituency in the Labour party questions the judgment of strategists and politicians who discern stabilizing effects in nuclear weapons. These Labour party members do not believe that war can be prevented by nuclear deterrence. They want to cut the defense budget, and nuclear weapons are their first big target. Certain members question the validity of the nuclear deterrent:

Has anyone re-examined the deterrent argument? Argentina attacked a nuclear state--Britain--when it went into the Falklands. Did nuclear weapons deter Galtieri? Not on your life. He knew that we could not use them against him. Saddam Hussein defied an ultimatum from two nuclear states--the United States and Britain. Did nuclear weapons deter him? Not on your life. He dropped some scuds on another nuclear state--Israel. Did nuclear weapons deter him? Not on your life. The whole deterrent argument is a fraud.<sup>129</sup>

Under the leadership of Neil Kinnock the Labour Party has attempted to appear more mainstream and has publicly supported the United Kingdom's nuclear deterrent. The party has not been completely successful in

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<sup>128</sup>Martin Holmes, "The British Defense Debate: The Domestic Political Context," *British Security Policy and the Atlantic Alliance: Prospect for the 1990s*, Institute For Foreign Policy Analysis, Inc., (New York: Pergamon, 1987), 13.

<sup>129</sup>Tony Benn, *Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) (Commons)*. Vol. 201, no. 39 (14 January 1992), column 863.



shaking off its reputation of supporting unilateral nuclear disarmament in the past:

A group of 30 or 40 Labour MPs continue to believe that Britain should renounce nuclear weapons. If Labour were to win the general election with only a modest majority, this group of unilateral nuclear disarmers could expect to have political influence out of proportion to their numbers.<sup>130</sup>

In view of the Conservative victory in the April 1992 elections, it is likely that the British will continue their nuclear modernization as planned. The perception of a lack of credible sub-strategic nuclear options to NATO planners is unsettling to some officials in London. The air-launched stand-off missile may be selected as a replacement for free-fall bombs, although the controversy remains over whether it should be pursued with France or the United States.<sup>131</sup> The political climate may make the Trident single-shot, single-warhead sub-strategic modernization option more feasible.<sup>132</sup>

### C. FRANCE

This section on France also begins with a survey of the background of deterrence. The background discussion emphasizes the decision making structures, the French desire for great power status, the unique independent

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<sup>130</sup>MacLeod, 3.

<sup>131</sup>"Deterrence after INF," paragraphs 6 and 9.

<sup>132</sup>Witt, 10; Cook, 789; and *Official Report (Commons)*, column 187.

nature of the deterrent, the declaratory policy, deterrence theories, and the unique French historical experience. The section concludes with an overview of French nuclear forces and judgements about the future.

### 1. Background of Deterrence

The evolution of the French nuclear deterrent has proceeded under three separate constitutional decision-making structures. Political instability and frequent governmental changes complicated matters during the Third and Fourth Republics. Nevertheless, the basis was laid for further developments under the Fifth Republic.

The constitution of the Fifth Republic has since 1958 provided for a relatively weak National Assembly and Senate, and the powers of the President are especially strong with respect to the direction of foreign and military policy--so much so that French experts have themselves described the system as a "nuclear monarchy."<sup>133</sup>

French Presidents in the Fifth Republic have enjoyed an authoritative position in defining nuclear strategy unparalleled in other Western nuclear powers. Although this position has been challenged at times by both the Prime Minister and the National Assembly, the President's supreme role has generally

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<sup>133</sup>Samy Cohen, *La monarchie nucléaire: Les Coulisses de la politique étrangère sous la Ve République* (Paris: Hachette, 1986); quoted in Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 25.

been respected to date.<sup>134</sup> The Fifth Republic produced a decision-making structure which provides viability and continuity to the French nuclear deterrent.

Much like the British, the French obtained nuclear weapons partly because of their interest in great power status. France's autonomous nuclear accomplishments and preoccupation with rank and status add a unique element to the French deterrent. In the words of a former French defense minister, nuclear weapons have made France "indisputably, the world's third military power."<sup>135</sup>

The French have attempted to develop an independent nuclear force with an array of launch platforms comparable to a nuclear superpower. As Lawrence Freedman has noted, "France's independence has been expensive--a regular twenty percent of the defence budget. Britain's expenditure has been a few percent of a comparable budget."<sup>136</sup>

France has used this position to maintain a special non-integrated status within NATO. The French insist on a "distinctly independent security

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<sup>134</sup>David S. Yost, "Mitterrand and Defense and Security Policy," *French Politics & Society*, Vol.9, Nos. 3-4 (Summer/Fall 1991): 149.

<sup>135</sup>Former Defense Minister Jean Pierre Chevènement interview in *Le Monde*, July 14, 1988, 11; quoted in Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 27.

<sup>136</sup>Lawrence Freedman, paper in U.K. Parliament. "Anglo/French Defence Cooperation," *Sessional Papers* (Commons), 1991-92, *Defence Committee*, 27 November 1991, 18.

status" in order to avoid "commitments that might tie their hands and limit their options."<sup>137</sup> This sentiment is exemplified in the French reluctance to accept the deployment of U.S. nuclear weapons on French soil or to base French nuclear weapons on German soil. The French cherish their autonomy in decision-making, and they consistently separate their deterrent force from NATO.

The French insist on these same distinctions in their declaratory policy.

French leaders emphasize:

That their nuclear strategy and employment policy are not in any way a subset of NATO strategy and policy. France's nuclear strategy, they say, is intended for deterrence and foresees only a limited and prompt "ultimate warning" employment of "pre-strategic" nuclear weapons.<sup>138</sup>

France also maintains a complex group of theories supporting the independent nature of its nuclear deterrent. In the past these theories, "proportional deterrence" and national nuclear "sanctuarization," implied that France might have to face the Soviet Union alone.<sup>139</sup> These theories implied that French territory could be protected from an aggressor independent of the remainder of Europe. The justification for this "sanctuarization" was that the fear

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<sup>137</sup>Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 31-32.

<sup>138</sup>David S. Yost, "France in the New Europe," *Foreign Affairs* vol. 69 (Winter 1990/1991), 120.

<sup>139</sup>Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 37.

of French nuclear retaliation would outweigh the aggressor's territorial desires in France.

Much criticism was directed against this deterrence theory. Some questioned the ability of France to separate itself from the battle in the narrow region of Central Europe. Others challenged the relevance of France's nuclear deterrent in a superpower conflict. According to Lothar Rühl,

It is possible . . . that the simple threat of using nuclear weapons on the part of the medium power would decide the USSR to eliminate [as far as possible] this danger by a preventive nuclear attack without letting herself be influenced in her war strategy against her principal adversary . . . But the threat or use of [French] nuclear weapons could not deter the USSR as soon as the Soviet government had accepted the risk of an American nuclear retaliation in unleashing military aggression (with or without initial use of nuclear weapons).<sup>140</sup>

In other words, it was argued that France's independent stance placed its nuclear deterrent in a position of questionable viability between two superpower arsenals.

French deterrent doctrine has relied on a link between its "pre-strategic ultimate warning" and its strategic forces. In the view of the French, a potential aggressor would not risk the nuclear escalation that might take place in a conflict with the French. The French emphasize the war-prevention effects of nuclear

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<sup>140</sup>Lothar Rühl, *La politique militaire de la cinquième république* (Paris: Fondation Nationale des Sciences Politiques, 190-191; quoted in David S. Yost, *France's Deterrent Posture and Security in Europe, Part II: Strategic and Arms Control Implications*, Adelphi Paper No.185 (London: The International Institute For Strategic Studies, 1985), 23.



weapons to such an extent that they are considered weapons that will never be used.

France may take this extreme position on its nuclear deterrent due to its distinct national experience regarding war.<sup>141</sup> "Britain has not been invaded since 1066, and the last invasion of the continental United States was in 1814."<sup>142</sup> The French experienced the humiliating Nazi occupation and division in 1940-1944. A nuclear deterrent that makes war unthinkable and shelters the country from outside aggression is vital to their national interest.

The determination of the French regarding an independent deterrent can also be attributed to their military experience, specifically their reliance on allies. "France has not won a major war on her own since the Napoleonic period, and one might hypothesize that allies remind the French of their dependence and weakened capacity for national security autonomy."<sup>143</sup> According to Giscard d'Estaing,

There is no contradiction between belonging to an alliance and pursuing an independent policy . . . If France were to align itself with some other country's policy, its policy would be simple, but it would cease to exist. Seen from the outside, France would become the province of a superpower

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<sup>141</sup>Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 43.

<sup>142</sup>*Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>143</sup>*Ibid.*, 43.

[that is, the United States]. This is not what our history teaches us [to accept], nor is it what our people want.<sup>144</sup>

France's experiences with allies in World War I and World War II reinforced French skepticism about reliance on allies.

The French war experiences with Germany are a strong determinant in their deterrent policy. France was invaded by the Germans three times in less than a century (1870, 1914, 1940). Frenchmen generally agree that Germany must remain a non-nuclear country. "For some Frenchman, it appears France's nuclear weapons status compensates for Germany's economic and demographic superiority over France."<sup>145</sup>

A discussion of the French nuclear deterrent is incomplete without analyzing the influence of Charles de Gaulle. De Gaulle is a striking symbol of France's historical experience. It was de Gaulle's leadership that produced the legacy that surrounds the nuclear deterrent. His nuclear posture was "central to the idea of France's restored status, grandeur, and autonomy."<sup>146</sup>

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<sup>144</sup>Giscard d'Estaing, television interview of 26 February 1980, in *La Politique Étrangère de la France, Textes et documents*, 1er trimestre 1980 (Paris: Documentation Française, 1980), pp. 105-106; cited in David S. Yost, "The Defense Policy of France," draft of August 1992, 18.

<sup>145</sup>Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 42.

<sup>146</sup>Yost, *Strategic Culture*, 45.

The French have been the Western country with the strongest consensus behind their nuclear deterrent.<sup>147</sup> The support of the Socialist Party since 1978 has helped to raise public support to majorities between sixty-seven and seventy-two percent.<sup>148</sup> The end of the Cold War has, however, stimulated discussion within the Socialist Party on defense reductions. Differences exist between the Gaullists and the Socialists on certain weapons systems, but the nuclear forces retain widespread support in French politics, with the principal exception of the ecology-oriented movements. Much of this stature stems from the legacy that the weapons possess through their association with de Gaulle.

## 2. French Nuclear Forces

The French have succeeded in producing a nuclear force that has matched the superpowers in most delivery modes. Their triad includes 5 SSBNs, 18 Intermediate Range Ballistic Missiles (IRBMs), and multiple strategic air assets.<sup>149</sup> The French also maintain "pre-strategic" assets in the form of air-delivered weapons. The submarine program is considered the most survivable portion of this deterrent force.

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<sup>147</sup>*Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>148</sup>Michel Dobry, "Le jeu du consensus," *Pouvoirs*, no.38, 1986, 62; quoted in Yost, *Strategic Debate*, 69.

<sup>149</sup>For a more detailed analysis of French nuclear forces see Yost, *Western Nuclear Force Structures*.

### 3. Future Prospects

The future of the French nuclear deterrent appears to be more in question than at any other time in its history. It was designed to deter the massive Soviet forces, and with the dissolution of the Soviet Union it seems to have lost its original strategic *raison d'être*. Nevertheless, the French will not surrender one of their prize accomplishments and vital security mechanisms. It is probable that some systems will be reduced or their modernization slowed, but it is unlikely that any drastic changes will occur in their deterrent force.

The French are faced with quite a challenge as they mold their deterrent to meet the challenges of an evolving European security environment. They must continue to deter the uncertainty in the East, and provide for the emerging threats from the South.

It is unlikely that a joint multi-national European nuclear force will develop in the near term, although recent statements by French leaders have alluded to such a concept. Neither the French nor the British have been very enthusiastic about sharing nuclear control with non-nuclear states. Moreover, the Germans may not comfortably sacrifice their American deterrent protection for a less capable and less reliable European substitute. Fiscal constraints may encourage the United Kingdom and France to bridge their differences and cooperate on joint development of the long-range air-launched stand-off missile.

French leaders are faced with a disgruntled electorate that recently voiced disapproval of the *status quo*. They will face pressure to reorder priorities and improve the nation's economic condition at the expense of the military. It is nonetheless unlikely that the nuclear deterrent will experience any substantial modifications. As remarked by a Gaullist member of the National Assembly,

If our country plays a preeminent role in determining Europe's future, is one of the United Nations Security Council's five permanent members, exercises a major influence on part of Africa and has the ambition to play a role in the Middle East, it is neither because of its industrial strength, its financial resources or its cultural *rayonnement* (...), but because of its independent defence policy and the possession of nuclear weapons.<sup>150</sup>

#### D. GERMAN PERSPECTIVES

The Federal Republic has had mixed feelings about the nuclear deterrents of both the United Kingdom and France. In one respect these forces have contributed to the security of Western Europe. Nevertheless, the Federal Republic's conventional force responsibilities may have been increased by the diverted resources required to complete and modernize the French and British nuclear deterrents.

This section surveys German perspectives on the nuclear forces of these two countries. It begins with German impressions of the British forces, followed by

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<sup>150</sup>François Fillon, "Francois Mitterrand a dégaé en touche," *Le Monde*, 26 May 1989; cited in Diego A. Ruiz Palmer, *French Strategic Options in the 1990s*, Adelphi Paper no. 260 (London: International Institute of International Studies, 1991), 15.



the French forces. The section concludes with an overview of the role of these European nuclear forces in the security of the Federal Republic.

### 1. The United Kingdom

According to Lawrence Freedman, "In bilateral Anglo-German relations, questions of nuclear policy have not acquired the importance that they have in the relations between Britain and France, and between France and Germany."<sup>151</sup> The specifics or extent of the nuclear relationship between the Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom are rarely delineated in public sources. Neither country publicly proclaims the existence of the relationship. This ambiguity stems from the reluctance of the British to commit themselves to a specific guarantee, and German reluctance to rely on a British guarantee.

The Germans are reluctant to rely on the British for several reasons. British animosities linger from Germany's checkered past. Germans are aware of these feelings and are therefore probably less inclined to value a security guarantee from the United Kingdom.

Some Germans minimize the value of an extended deterrent from a small nuclear power. As Christoph Bertram argues,

Britain will never decide to launch a strategic attack on the Soviet Union because her Allies want it but only because she feels that her own, ultimate security cannot be safeguarded in any other way. NATO rules cannot

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<sup>151</sup>Freedman, 185.

change what is, after all, the elementary rule of nuclear military power: it is a political, not a military decision, and it is one you take only for yourself, not on behalf of another power because its consequences concern your own very survival.<sup>152</sup>

## 2. France

The Germans have shown much more interest in the nuclear policy of the French than in that of the British. The Federal Republic has had little influence in French nuclear planning due to France's withdrawal from NATO's integrated military command. The realization that certain French short range nuclear weapons might be targeted on German soil raised concerns.

These concerns were alleviated somewhat with an unprecedented decision on consultation announced by President Mitterrand on 28 February 1986.

Within the limits imposed by the extreme rapidity of such decisions, the President of the Republic declares himself disposed to consult the Chancellor of the FRG on the possible employment of prestrategic French weapons on German territory. He notes that the decision cannot be shared in this matter. The President of the Republic indicates that he has decided, with the Chancellor of the FRG, to equip himself with technical means for immediate and reliable consultation in times of crisis.<sup>153</sup>

This announcement marked the end of over two decades of refusing to consult or cooperate with the Federal Republic in the area of nuclear weapons policy.

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<sup>152</sup>Christoph Bertram, "Britain's Nuclear Weapons and West German Security," in *British-German Defence Cooperation: Partners within the Alliance*, eds. Karl Kaiser and John Roper (London: Jane's, 1988), 203.

<sup>153</sup>*Le Monde*, 2-3 March 1986, 4; cited in David S. Yost, "Franco-German Defence Cooperation," in Stephen F. Szabo, ed., *The Bundeswehr and Western Security* (London: Macmillan, 1990), 223.

Some West Germans reacted to the consultation promise as a measure long overdue and called for further cooperation. As David Yost explains,

In their view, the Federal Republic has been indirectly helping to pay the bill for French nuclear forces by shouldering so much of the conventional burden in Western Europe, and France should accept a West German right to have some say regarding French military investments, nuclear and non-nuclear.<sup>154</sup>

German experts want to ensure that French nuclear policy is coordinated with NATO policy and is not simply "a nuclear counteroffensive on German soil."<sup>155</sup>

Some German experts have discerned value in the French nuclear force as a foundation for greater West European autonomy in defence in the future.

As Peter Stratmann has noted:

It is important to prevent the USSR from becoming the sole nuclear power in Europe. The material prerequisites for developing a sufficient politico-strategic counterweight in Western Europe must be preserved in order to obviate potential difficulties that could result from a total dependence on the American readiness to maintain extended strategic deterrence in the long run . . . [S]tatements by [some] conservative voices in the Federal Republic appear short-sighted in seeing advantage in building strategic missile defence systems such that the French 'force de dissuasion,' the most visible symbol of the Gaullist pretence of independence and status discrimination over the neighbour across the Rhine, would become obsolete.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>154</sup>Yost, David S. "Franco-German Defence Cooperation," in Stephen F. Szabo, ed., *The Bundeswehr and Western Security*, (London: Macmillan, 1990), 238.

<sup>155</sup>*Ibid*, 239.

<sup>156</sup>K.Peter Stratmann, *Aspekte der Sicherheits politischen und Militärstrategischen Entwicklung in den 90er Jahren*, SWP-AP 2474 (Ebenhausen: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, June 1986), 30; cited in Yost, "Franco-German," 240.

Several Germans such as Egon Bahr, Helmut Schmidt and Alfred Dregger have called for an explicit French nuclear guarantee.<sup>157</sup> Former State Secretary of Defense Lothar Rühl has said that Bonn would welcome it "if the French nuclear forces were to extend their protection to include the Federal Republic, in addition to the protection offered by the American nuclear forces and NATO's own nuclear weapons in Europe. However, only as an addition, not as an alternative."<sup>158</sup> In 1985, then-Defense Minister Manfred Wörner echoed these views, noting, "France's nuclear capability is insufficient to protect the Federal Republic. We will have to continue to rely on the American nuclear umbrella."<sup>159</sup>

A closer security relationship between France and Germany that includes reliance on French nuclear weapons is probably still many years away. Using the "Eurocorps", the October 1991 Kohl-Mitterrand initiative on a European army, the Germans will attempt to draw the French closer to NATO's integrated military structure. These closer relations are intended to set the foundation for

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<sup>157</sup>For Bahr, see *Der Spiegel*, 20 May 1985, pp. 126-127; for Schmidt, *Deutscher Bundestag, Stenographischer Bericht, Plenarprotokoll 10/77*, 28 June 1984, pp.5596-5603; for Dregger, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 19 June 1987, 2; cited in Yost, "Franco-German," 241.

<sup>158</sup>Rühl cited in DPA dispatch of 4 October 1985 in *FBIS-Western Europe*, 8 October 1985, p. J4; cited in Yost, "Franco-German," 241.

<sup>159</sup>Wörner interview in *International Defense Review*, vol. 18, no. 9, 1985, 1393; cited in Yost, "Franco-German," 241.



future advancements, but many Germans continue to consider French policy still "committed to national ends."<sup>160</sup> It will be some time before a majority of Germans would consider nuclear cooperation with the French as a viable alternative. Recent interview sources suggest that Helmut Schmidt's judgements in 1987 remain valid today:

The politicians in France ought to know that the Germans have a picture of France's security policy that implies the belief that in the case of war the French neighbour would participate in defence only when it had already become clear that the fight on the territory east of France had been lost. In other words, the Germans believe that the French would only join in the battle for Europe when it would already be too late. It must be understood on the French side that this is the German view, whether right or wrong. This is a dangerous picture, because it makes the Germans believe that France would not be a fully reliable partner in the case of war.<sup>161</sup>

## E. CONCLUSION

The stockpile reduction agreements of the United States and the former Soviet Union will increase the relative numerical importance of the nuclear weapons of the United Kingdom and France. Whether both of these countries can maintain their most important modernization plans in the face of inevitable reductions remains to be seen. Both countries made noteworthy nuclear force reductions in 1992, mainly in non-strategic systems.

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<sup>160</sup>Yost, "Franco-German," 243.

<sup>161</sup>Helmut Schmidt, "Deutsch-französische Zusammenarbeit in der Sicherheitspolitik," *Europa-Archiv*, vol. 42, 10 June 1987, 311; cited in Yost, "Franco-German," 243.



Cooperation between the United Kingdom and France with respect to nuclear weapons policy is possible. Funding constraints may even make cooperation a necessity. Further development of this cooperation into some form of European deterrent is nonetheless probably years away. Neither country is currently disposed to sacrifice its national autonomy to develop a European nuclear deterrent.

Germany's perspective on France and the United Kingdom and their nuclear forces is subdued. For the most part, Germans do not consider either country capable of providing a viable nuclear umbrella to the Federal Republic. From a German perspective, the forces of these countries "do not provide deterrence beyond the narrowest definition of British and French national security."<sup>162</sup>

The Federal Republic will continue to remain wary of a European deterrent until integration has reached a point where the French and the British consider German territory a part of their common home; this idea is many years away. As long as the Federal Republic can rely on the nuclear guarantee provided by the United States, Germans will prefer to remain under the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Whether the Germans can count on the continued viability of the American guarantee is the subject of the next chapter.

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<sup>162</sup>Bertram, 209.

## IV. GERMAN PERSPECTIVES ON THE UNITED STATES COMMITMENT

### A. INTRODUCTION

The Federal Republic and the United States have been joined in a mutually beneficial security partnership for over forty years. The Federal Republic achieved unification and prosperity under the security umbrella of the United States and NATO. The United States and the Federal Republic worked together, with their NATO allies, to contain Soviet expansion. The removal of the primary stimulus for this close relationship, owing to the collapse of the USSR, is certain to promote changes in transatlantic relations.

This chapter focuses on German perceptions of the continued validity of the American nuclear guarantee. To reach informed judgements about the future of this guarantee the chapter begins with a survey of the United States commitment to Europe since the end of the second world war. There is a direct correlation between the American commitment to Europe, often superficially and symbolically reckoned in terms of the number of troops deployed, and the validity of the U.S. nuclear guarantee. It is often argued that as long as there are U.S. troops in Germany, the United States is committed to use all means available, including nuclear weapons, to ensure their defense. The chapter continues with

German perspectives on this commitment and concludes with judgments about the future of the American nuclear guarantee to Germany.

## B. BACKGROUND OF A COMMITMENT

George Washington set the tone for American policy towards Europe with his farewell address in 1796, "The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations to have with them as little *political* connection as possible." The decision to negotiate the North Atlantic Treaty is often taken for granted. Establishing an "entangling alliance" with Europe was, however, a revolution in American diplomacy.

Abstention from European political and military entanglements had been the hallmark of American diplomatic history. It was formulated in Washington's farewell address in 1796, confirmed in Jefferson's inaugural address in 1801, and codified in the Monroe Doctrine of 1823.<sup>163</sup>

When the United States first started working towards the recovery of Europe in the late 1940s, there was no intention of military deployments. The Marshall Plan of 1947 was based on the principle of self-help and self-reliance. It was not until 1948 that American policy makers determined that to ensure European

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<sup>163</sup>Lawrence S. Kaplan, *NATO and the United States* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1988), 1.

recovery, the United States would have to underwrite Western European security.<sup>164</sup>

The first step towards acknowledging this security requirement was the Vandenburg Resolution of June 1948. This resolution legitimized the idea of a formal security arrangement with Western Europe while emphasizing self-help and mutual aid.

The next step was the negotiation of the North Atlantic Treaty. There were reservations about the commitment required by the Treaty. Congress was willing to commit equipment but no troops, and was concerned about potentially sacrificing its power to declare war. The Senate supported the idea that the treaty was a natural outgrowth of the Marshall Plan. The treaty sent a signal to the Soviet Union that America was committed to Europe's defense based on self-help.<sup>165</sup> The United States approved the North Atlantic Treaty on 21 July 1949. Nevertheless, there were reservations about the military obligations incurred in the treaty that would later hamper its implementation.

These reservations were voiced during the floor debate of the Military Assistance Program (MAP). "Both the Truman Administration and the European allies believed that the purposes of the North Atlantic Treaty would only be

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<sup>164</sup>Phil Williams, *The Senate and U.S. Troops in Europe* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1985), 11.

<sup>165</sup>*Ibid.*, 21-23.

achieved if accompanied by a programme for military assistance (MAP) to Western Europe."<sup>166</sup> The administration maneuvered the bill through Congress with difficulty. The executive battled members reluctant to commit large force levels to Europe. Moreover, the administration was experiencing a decay of its bi-partisan support for foreign policy as the Republicans were blaming the administration for the fall of China in October 1949.

The administration struggled to define its European policy while it was losing credibility with its policy in Asia. Within the State Department the European security policy was receiving new emphasis:

The fall of China and the Soviet atomic explosion . . . provoked a reappraisal of American security problems . . . and an important segment of opinion within the State Department had concluded not only that the *military* danger from the Soviet Union was significant but that it would become more so: as Soviet atomic developments eroded the United States advantage thereby neutralising or nullifying the deterrent effect of American atomic weapons, Soviet conventional aggression could be anticipated.<sup>167</sup>

The pace of rearmament in Europe and the United States needed to increase.

The North Korean attack against South Korea on 25 June 1950 initiated this change and the administration decided to send U.S. troops to Europe. There was concern that the existing force structure in Europe would not be sufficient to deter Soviet aggression.

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<sup>166</sup>Ibid., 27.

<sup>167</sup>Ibid., 34.



The elaborate NATO framework with its numerous subsidiary units, now appeared an empty shell incapable of repelling a sudden attack of any magnitude. What was worse, the allies lost confidence for the moment in NATO's ability to prevent such an attack from occurring. What had happened in the Far East could happen in Europe.<sup>168</sup>

The next step in solidifying the security arrangement with the Europeans had been decided. However, some congressmen were more concerned about the threat to the American economy than the threat to Atlantic security.<sup>169</sup> There was no question that the decision to send U.S. troops to Europe would be expensive.

In 1951 a major debate in Congress determined the outcome. Senator Taft defined the key issues of the debate. The first of these issues was burden-sharing.

What kind of military contribution was the United States intending to make to Atlantic defence? How did this compare with European efforts? Was the distribution of effort an equitable one? Indeed, was the United States to play a major or merely supporting role in providing for European security?<sup>170</sup>

A second theme concerned strategic military planning. It involved the future scope of defense spending and how funds would be allocated between the

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<sup>168</sup>Lawrence S. Kaplan, *A Community of Interests: NATO and the Military Assistance Program, 1948-1951* (Washington: Office of the Secretary of Defense, Historical Office, 1980), 105; quoted in Williams, 36.

<sup>169</sup>Williams, 41.

<sup>170</sup>*Ibid.*, 56.

services. It included the debate on whether the U.S. should rely on air power or ground forces.<sup>171</sup>

When Congress decided to support the administration's decision to commit troops to Europe, America once again diverged from its isolationist tendency in the past.

For a nation that had always been reluctant to support a standing army, and had traditionally relied upon wartime mobilization rather than peacetime preparedness, the decision to send U.S. troops to Europe was momentous--as great a departure from the past precepts of American military policy as the North Atlantic Treaty had been from the orthodoxies of American diplomacy.<sup>172</sup>

America was making commitments that implied large defense budgets for the foreseeable future.

President Eisenhower responded to these economic concerns with the "New Look" in 1954. With an emphasis on "massive retaliation" this new policy was designed to save money. It would balance the overwhelming conventional forces of the Soviet Union with strategic nuclear air power, reducing the need for the costly U.S. conventional buildup. The plan was never taken to its logical

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<sup>171</sup>The tone for this debate was provided by former President Hoover, who proposed a greater reliance on air and naval power. The essence of this argument was to achieve containment by controlling the oceans while forward-based (in Japan and Great Britain) strategic air power deterred aggression from Soviet forces. This argument entailed the withdrawal of the troop commitment to Europe.

<sup>172</sup>Williams, 43.

conclusion by significantly reducing European troop levels, but nevertheless some members of Congress continued to challenge these overseas commitments.

Senator Mike Mansfield, a Democrat from Montana, emerged as the leading critic of the executive's European troop policy. Mansfield continually fought foreign troop commitments in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The sentiment that Mansfield represented was a common theme in congressional criticism of the European commitment. There was a perception that the Europeans were not contributing adequately to their own defense. European economic recovery was extremely successful while America faced continual balance of payment deficits. The mood of many Americans indicated that it was time for the Europeans to pay for a greater portion of their own defense.

Senator Mansfield justified a troop withdrawal as a reaction to the new international security environment. Mansfield believed that the conventional inferiority of allied forces in Europe made the role of the U.S. forces that of a nuclear "trip wire." The launch of *Sputnik* in 1957 had highlighted American vulnerability to nuclear retaliation and the importance of a visible U.S. commitment to European security. Mansfield felt that this U.S. deployment could be substantially reduced without affecting its primary role as a "trip wire."

Mansfield received support for his initiatives from various related interests.

Different senators had different concerns: for some . . . the key issue was the fiscal dimension and especially the balance of payments problem; for others

it was the need to encourage greater burden-sharing by the Europeans; for yet others it was a way of expressing resentment against either European trade and agricultural practices or a lack of support for Vietnam.<sup>173</sup>

Mansfield's ideas contrasted sharply with the more flexible doctrine emphasized by the Kennedy administration in the early 1960s. The Kennedy administration was attempting to distance itself from the constraints of massive retaliation and the concept of U.S. forces serving as a trip wire. According to Wolfram Hanrieder,

In broad terms, the new strategy implied that the United States would not use nuclear weapons at the outset of hostilities except in reply to a nuclear attack, that small-scale attacks would not elicit a nuclear response at all, and that even in case of a massive attack NATO would initially respond only with conventional forces to allow time for negotiations with the opponent and consultations among the allies about the initial use of nuclear weapons.<sup>174</sup>

Flexible response did not allow for the troop reductions proposed by Mansfield. On the contrary, flexible response reduced the U.S. reliance on nuclear weapons and shifted emphasis to a conventional buildup.

By the early 1970s pressure against U.S. troops in Europe had peaked. The executive and Congress both addressed the anti-European sentiment by connecting security and economics. The reduction in American economic

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<sup>173</sup>Ibid., 144.

<sup>174</sup>Wolfram F. Hanrieder, *Germany, America, Europe: Forty Years of German Foreign Policy* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 71.



predominance in the 1970s made European economic integration a less attractive prospect in the eyes of some Americans. This concern was voiced in the Senate:

The development of the Common Market and its policies . . . cannot be considered separately from the NATO and military aspects of the American presence in Europe. The notion of *interdependence* so articulately drawn by the Europeans and the Executive Branch on the issue of NATO should be applied to the economic and trade relationships between us. And conversely, if Europeans do not accept a relationship of interdependence economically, then we should not accept the heavy burden that imposes upon the U.S. by the heavy commitment of men in Europe.<sup>175</sup>

Nonetheless, the administration defeated the Mansfield Amendment of 1973, which called for drastic reductions in European force levels. The administration used two traditional arguments: the fear of an unraveling Atlantic alliance, and the risk of hampering mutual force reduction negotiations. The administration also discredited the balance of payments argument, providing statistics that pointed out that the American-European military deficit was comparable to the American-European tourism deficit.<sup>176</sup> Secretary of Defense Laird discredited the burden-sharing argument by pointing out that "Most of the deployed forces

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<sup>175</sup>Memorandum to Senator Mansfield from Charles D. Ferris, December 28, 1972 regarding Trip to Europe, Fall 1972 (Majority Leader Files, Mansfield Collection, University of Montana, Missoula), 4; quoted in Williams, 206.

<sup>176</sup>Williams, 218.



are supplied by our allies--something on the order of 90 per cent of the ground forces, 80 per cent of the ships, and 75 per cent of the aircraft."<sup>177</sup>

The administration alone could not quell the rising tide of pressure against U.S. troops in Europe in 1974. It was developments in international and domestic politics that combined to reduce the pressure. The Yom Kippur War of October 1973 created renewed tensions with both the Soviet Union and the European allies. Détente was replaced by a more critical stance towards the Soviet Union that made discussion of a troop withdrawal unpopular.

The congressional pressure against U.S. troops in Europe has yet to reach the intensity of the Mansfield era or that of the "Great Debate" of 1951. Nevertheless, beginning in the early 1980s a pervasive interest in burden-sharing has dominated the troop question in Congress. This issue is not new to the debate, but it gained more prominence after the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979. There was concern that the allies reacted less vigorously to the invasion than some Americans would have liked.

Senator Ted Stevens of Alaska responded to this perceived trend by attempting to place a cap on U.S. forces in Europe in 1982. During the 1979-1983 INF debate discussed in chapter two, some congressmen threatened to withdraw

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<sup>177</sup>*Hearings before the Subcommittee on Arms Control, International Law and Organization of the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, Ninety-Third Congress, First Session on U.S. Forces in Europe, 25 July 1973* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1973), 14; quoted in Williams, 218.

troops from Europe if the West Europeans did not agree to deployment. The "no nukes-no troops" threat was an offshoot from the familiar theme of burden-sharing. In essence congressional leaders were insisting on nuclear "risk-sharing." Senator Nunn initiated an amendment in 1984 to tie U.S. troop levels in Europe to agreed increases in European defense budgets. Dwindling defense budgets and ballooning trade and national budget deficits continue to motivate congressional concerns about equitable burden-sharing.

The dissolution of the Soviet Union and the revolution in eastern Europe have stimulated a reappraisal of the European security framework. The 1990-1991 Gulf War brought the issue to the forefront as many legislators were concerned that the allies would not contribute their share. Countries such as Germany were under scrutiny due to their minimal force commitment.

Recent congressional debates reflect this burden-sharing concern. Patricia Schroeder, the Colorado Democrat who chairs the House Armed Services Committee Defense Burdensharing Panel, in 1991 championed an advisory amendment to reduce the U.S. forces in Europe to 100,000 by 1995. A similar measure by Senator Kent Conrad was successful, indicating a looming challenge to the executive.

For more than a decade, resentment had festered on Capitol Hill over the belief that the United States has shouldered far too much of the cost of

collective defense, permitting economic dynamos such as Japan and Germany to pour money instead into extending their competitive edge.<sup>178</sup>

The future of President Bush's proposal to retain 150,000 U.S. troops in Europe is questioned by many lawmakers. The situation is exacerbated by the stalemate on European farm subsidies in the current General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations. In a recent security conference in Munich, Senator Richard Lugar, R-Ind, stated:

I don't think the Europeans understand how far they have to move on trade. If they don't back down, it could undermine NATO and American participation in the alliance. We're heading to a precipice that Europeans really don't understand.<sup>179</sup>

In the middle of a deep recession and large defense budget cuts, the U.S. commitment to European security is difficult to sell. Senator John McCain, R-Ariz., made the point in concrete terms: "A politician finds it very difficult, when Williams Air Force Base in Arizona is being closed, to explain the rationale for keeping bases overseas."<sup>180</sup> The defense budget cuts will stimulate arguments for drawing U.S. forces away from Europe, on the grounds that the Europeans can handle their own defense.

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<sup>178</sup>Pat Towell, "Debating How to Share the Burden." *Congressional Quarterly*, May 25, 1991, 1385.

<sup>179</sup>Lugar cited in Marc Fisher, "U.S. Officials Take Tough New Line On Europe," *The International Herald Tribune*, 10 February 1992.

<sup>180</sup>McCain cited in Pat Towell, "Bush's Europe Troop Plan Faces Some Paring, Lawmakers Say," *Congressional Quarterly*, 15 February 1992, 360.

The debate on maintaining U.S. troops in Europe has remained remarkably consistent over the years. The central issue has remained burden-sharing. Connections are made between trade and security, and an indefinite European reliance on U.S. security assistance. The domestic U.S. economic issue has remained pervasive throughout the decades. Lawmakers concerned about the cost of maintaining a large military have continually challenged foreign troop deployments in search of a peace dividend.

### C. GERMAN PERSPECTIVES

In the opinion of some Germans, at times the United States has been inconsistent and almost indifferent with respect to the security of the Federal Republic. Nevertheless, the relationship has remained solid; and Germans realize, although they may not openly express it, that they have prospered under the United States security umbrella.

With respect to the nuclear guarantee, chapter two depicts the history of this relationship and German concerns throughout. According to Robert Blackwill,

Each change in NATO nuclear doctrine from Massive Retaliation in the early 1950s to Flexible Response in 1967 to Last Resort in 1990 provoked the greatest possible scrutiny and often anxiety from Bonn, lest the change mean that the United States did not intend credibly to threaten nuclear use, thus weakening deterrence, or conversely that Washington really did intend to

employ these awful weapons early, recklessly, and massively on German territory in the event of a conflict.<sup>181</sup>

This section concentrates on German perspectives in the new security environment. It concentrates on German views of the German-American security partnership since November 1989. These perspectives have their origins in the evolution of the U.S. commitment to Europe and German policy reactions to the American initiatives discussed in chapter two. The opinions are naturally influenced by the dynamics of the relationship between the two countries in all fields.

### 1. Political and Economic Relations

German perspectives on political relations with the United States have been mixed. In one respect, feelings have been quite positive. According to Gebhard Schweigler, "the role played by the United States in the destruction of the Wall and the subsequent reunification of Germany has left both sides with good feelings toward each other--feelings of achievement, pride, gratitude, and commitment."<sup>182</sup> Nonetheless, some of the lingering feelings from the reunification process are more negative. Some Germans remain embarrassed that

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<sup>181</sup>Robert D. Blackwill, "Patterns of Partnership: The U.S.-German Security Relationship in the 1990s," in *From Occupation to Cooperation: The United States and United Germany in a Changing World Order*, Steven Muller and Gebhard Schweigler, eds. (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992), 136.

<sup>182</sup>Gebhard Schweigler, "Problems and Prospects for Partners in Leadership," in *From Occupation*, Muller and Schweigler, 244.



U.S. encouragement played such a large part in persuading reluctant Germans to risk reunification.<sup>183</sup>

Criticism also stems from the perception that the United States is in decline. As the post-Cold War era begins, the United States is weakened in the areas which will be required for many future security problems in Central and Eastern Europe: economic links, political influence, and financial resources.<sup>184</sup> According to Gebhard Schweigler,

Especially among Germany's intellectual elite, reports about the United States' allegedly imminent decline as a superpower probably meet as much with a certain degree of *Schadenfreude* (pleasure at bad news) as with concern over the difficulties faced by Germany's most important ally. That glee over America's decline rests on a rejection of the United States as a role model, which in turn tends to question the relevance of the United States as an ally and partner.<sup>185</sup>

A recently reported leak of a preliminary draft of a Defense Planning Guidance document provided another example of problems in U.S.-German relations. The document implied that Germany might someday seek to become a nuclear power. German government spokesman Dieter Vogel responded to this

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<sup>183</sup>Schweigler, 226.

<sup>184</sup>Karl Kaiser, "Security Relationships: Germany," *From Occupation*, Muller and Schweigler, 151.

<sup>185</sup>Schweigler, 248.

leak stating, "This scenario that Germany could one day in the future have its own nuclear weapons is not, absolutely not, justified."<sup>186</sup>

There is no domestic support for acquiring a national nuclear deterrent in the Federal Republic. According to John Van Oudenaren, "Nuclear weapons are not seen as desirable for a Germany that has so convincingly demonstrated both its economic and moral superiority."<sup>187</sup> Casual assessments by American security analysts suggesting the inevitable nature of a German national nuclear deterrent only complicate the future relationship between the two countries.

Economic issues have played a dominant role in the relations between these two countries, as highlighted in earlier parts of this chapter. As economic problems mount in the United States, pressure on the Federal Republic will increase to achieve concessions on GATT. The security relationship is always implicitly linked to economic ties. According to Ronald Asmus, "It would be a tremendous irony if the effort to reshape the transatlantic security link were to be

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<sup>186</sup>"Germany Denies U.S. View Of Nation as Nuclear Power," *The Wall Street Journal*, 17 March 1992.

<sup>187</sup>John Van Oudenaren, "Nuclear Weapons in the 1990s and Beyond," in *Nuclear Weapons in the Changing World: Perspectives from Europe, Asia, and North America*, eds. Patrick J. Garrity and Steven A Maaranen (New York: Plenum Press, 1992), 47.

undercut by the inability to forge a new and compatible set of transatlantic economic relationships."<sup>188</sup>

## 2. The New Transatlantic Security Relationship

The nature of the new transatlantic security relationship will depend greatly on the political and economic relationship discussed above. This new security relationship will provide a framework for the role of nuclear deterrence in the defense policy of the Federal Republic. The first step in developing this framework is determining the role of the United States in future European defense arrangements.

### *a. European Defense Identity*

Germany's views on a new Western European defense identity are divided between a NATO-based proposal and a more autonomous European defense proposal. The NATO proposition entails a greater American influence within a structure of proven effectiveness which has been successful for over forty years. The alternative systems, based on either the European Community (EC) and the Western European Union (WEU) or on the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE), would have less American influence and currently lack a tested institutional infrastructure in defense matters.

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<sup>188</sup>Ronald D. Asmus, "Germany and America: Partners in Leadership?" *Survival* vol. 33, no. 6 (November/December 1991): 550.

The German government has attempted to maintain its links with the United States while moving forward in the area of European integration. It has achieved this by remaining committed to NATO while pursuing more independent European defense proposals. Germany's multi-faceted approach was demonstrated with two recent events.

On 2 October 1991, "German Foreign Minister Hans-Dietrich Genscher and US Secretary of State James Baker III suggested establishment of a 'North Atlantic Cooperation Council.'"<sup>189</sup> This proposal was designed to develop a liaison between the Eastern European nations, including the successor states of the former Soviet Union, and NATO. It served mainly as a cautious move to postpone dealing with requests by the Eastern European nations to be included in the NATO security guarantee. For Germany it symbolized a continued commitment to use NATO as a vehicle for future European security needs.

Two weeks later, on 14 October 1991, Germany and France called for the "creation of a corps-strength Western European army as a step toward giving the region an independent defense capability."<sup>190</sup> This implied a German

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<sup>189</sup>Peter Grier, "Eastern Europeans Wary of Neighborhood Conflicts," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 25 October 1991, 7.

<sup>190</sup>Alan Riding, "Mitterrand Joins Kohl in Proposing a European Army," *New York Times*, 17 October 1991, A7.

move towards the French position favoring an independent European defense force. A German official in the Ministry of Defense highlighted this conflict: "We cannot sit on the fence forever, because in the long term there will be a conflict between our desire for a European defense identity and our belief in a strong Atlantic alliance."<sup>191</sup>

The government's security model encompasses the integration of Europe while maintaining the nuclear security guarantee of the United States. To maintain a continued American nuclear umbrella for Europe the governing coalition continues to emphasize a role for NATO in a future European security structure. Their concept of this role states:

As far as NATO is concerned, it will have to change "its nature and structure" adaptive to a unifying Europe: "Already today a shift is evident in NATO away from dominance by the United States toward an alliance of two partners of equal weight." Still, the Alliance "will have to assure to the Europeans, also in the future, the nuclear protection of the United States."<sup>192</sup>

The SPD envisages a more temporary role for NATO and concentrates its security structure plans on the CSCE. In line with the party's principle of "common security" the SPD manifesto declares:

The objective of all these steps is the creation of a European Security System into which the alliances merge, in which isolated national actions are

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<sup>191</sup>"A la recherche de l'Europe perdue," *The Economist*, 12 October 1991, 56.

<sup>192</sup>Horst Teltschik cited in *German Perspectives on NATO and European Security*, (Fairfax, VA: National Security Research, Inc., August 1991), 24.



impossible and in which the armed forces of the participating nations are involved.<sup>193</sup>

The temporary role assigned to NATO is designed to allow the CSCE/European Security System to develop "conflict control mechanisms":

On the path towards a European Security System it will be necessary for the Soviet Union and NATO to change their military strategies and doctrines and to adjust to the new actualities in Europe. Whilst retaining their defensive capability it will be necessary for the armed forces of both sides to become on the one hand incapable of attack and on the other to become capable of transbloc cooperation.<sup>194</sup>

The SPD proposes a security structure that is European-based, separated from the "dominance" of the United States and NATO. The current CDU/CSU-FDP government wants to remain closely connected with the United States, although it is also interested in a more autonomous approach to Western European defense identity. The recent announcement by France and Germany concerning the establishment of a European corps is a step in this direction. The German government has offered assurances that this force will work within the framework of NATO, although it is still perceived as a move towards a more European defense identity.

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<sup>193</sup>"From the Confrontation of the Blocs to a European Security System," unpublished position paper issued by the *Presseservice der SPD*, 25 April 1990, 6; cited in National Security Research, 43.

<sup>194</sup>*Ibid.*, 3, 43.

Critics of this European defense identity consider it to be hasty and ill-conceived. In their opinion it lacks an organization to control it, an infrastructure to meet logistical and lift requirements, and a reconnaissance/tactical anti-missile defense capacity.<sup>195</sup> Most of these requirements have historically been provided by the United States or NATO. According to Hans Rühle,

The desire felt by many Western Europeans to Europeanise security policy and to arrive at a short-term *fait accompli* is here again seen to be due more to a generally felt need for greater detachment from the Americans than to any clear situation or of true progress toward European integration. The WEU's rapid reaction force is increasingly seen to be what it always was: a figment of political imagination, not properly thought out in terms of requirements, costs and consequences, doing more political damage than military good--a hare-brained strategic notion.<sup>196</sup>

Other critics of this trend are concerned that the Europeans may be marginalizing the U.S. security role in Europe. These critics highlight the American role in balancing nationalistic tendencies in Europe. According to Josef Joffe,

By sparing the West Europeans the necessity of autonomous choice in matters of defense, the United States removed the systemic cause of conflict that had underlain so many of Europe's past wars. (World War I is perhaps the best example.) By protecting Western Europe against others, the United

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<sup>195</sup>Hans Rühle, "European Alternative to NATO Force is Still 'A Hare-brained Strategic Notion,'" *Die Zeit*, 26 September 1991; published in *The German Tribune*, No. 1487, 6 October 1991.

<sup>196</sup>*Ibid.*

States also protected the half-continent against itself. And by paving the way from international anarchy to security community the United States not only defused ancient rivalries but also built the indispensable foundation for future cooperation.<sup>197</sup>

Hans-Dietrich Genscher echoed these ideas more recently,

German-American Friendship and European-American friendship belong to the constants in German foreign policy. . . . From the beginning [the Western alliance] was more than a reaction to the expansionist policy of the Soviet Union after the Second World War. The truth is that by creating this alliance we have drawn the lesson from the mistakes made after the First World War. It is for this reason that the collapse of the Warsaw Pact does not affect the Western alliance.<sup>198</sup>

This pacifying argument is often difficult to articulate, because it implies doubts about the peaceful nature of nations, including the Federal Republic of Germany. As Gerhard Schweigler has observed, "Western European nations will not readily admit that they cannot yet be trusted to live in peace with each other."<sup>199</sup>

### *b. The Nuclear Debate*

The nuclear debate in the Federal Republic has periodically been one of the most important and controversial security challenges of the day. Throughout its history the Federal Republic has relied on the U.S. nuclear

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<sup>197</sup>Josef Joffe, "Europe's American Pacifier," *Foreign Policy* no. 54 (Spring 1984): 68-69.

<sup>198</sup>Genscher, *Das Parlament*, no.13, 22 March 1991, 12; cited in Asmus, "Germany and America:Partners," 548.

<sup>199</sup>Schweigler, 228.

guarantee. Therefore the nuclear debate is in essence a debate on the future of the U.S. commitment.

"The German attitude toward nuclear deterrence . . . is as inconclusive as it is crucial."<sup>200</sup> This ambivalence stems from both widespread public ignorance about strategic affairs and Germany's precarious geopolitical position. The primary focus of contention between the dominant political forces is whether Europe should be denuclearized.

The government presently supports continued reliance on nuclear weapons in the context of *Rueckversicherung* ("reinsurance").<sup>201</sup> The concept is designed to maintain a U.S. guarantee as a hedge against a reversal of the recent positive trends in Europe. According to the Inspector-General of the Bundeswehr, Major General Klaus Naumann:

We are a non-nuclear state and will remain one as a unified Germany. We live in a neighborhood of nuclear nations, which will remain in that status. One of them is the Soviet Union. And one justification--especially for us Germans--for continuing to rely on nuclear protection is that we must continue to live in the nuclear shadow of the Soviet Union. Therefore a means must be found whereby a non-nuclear weapons state like Germany

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<sup>200</sup>Thomas Enders, Holger H. Mey, and Michael Rühle, "The New Germany and Nuclear Weapons," in *Nuclear Weapons in the Changing World: Perspectives from Europe, Asia, and North America*, eds. Patrick J. Garrity and Steven A. Maaranen (New York: Plenum Press, 1992), 127.

<sup>201</sup>National Security Research, 33.

is protected against Soviet use of nuclear weapons. We can realize that only through alliance with a nuclear power.<sup>202</sup>

German government circles look to the United States for this nuclear protection, although it is not quite clear how this deterrent will be exercised. The government calls for the continued presence of American nuclear arms on German soil. The justification for this position is the concept of "risk-sharing." According to General Naumann:

When we enter into an alliance with a nuclear power for the purpose of war-prevention--and there can be no other purpose--then that means a readiness for the reciprocal sharing of risks, because one cannot ask a nuclear power to assume alone, in the event of conflict, the truly "last" decision and thereby the total risk. We will thus always be confronted with the question: How can we share the nuclear risk? One way, which we took in the past, was the readiness to station nuclear weapons on our territory as a visible expression of risk-sharing. In what form, in what quantity and in what time-frame that is to be done (in the future) is something to be discussed in the Alliance and in the domestic political debate. . . . I believe that, in pursuit of a concept of mutual security, this is also a question that we will have to discuss with all openness with the Soviet Union.<sup>203</sup>

The new European security environment has made risk-sharing easier in some respects for the Germans. According to Rüdiger Moniac,

For Germany, the new atomic age will entail much less of a psychological and political burden, not to mention the fact that the use of nuclear weapons on German soil can already be considered utterly inconceivable. Even so,

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<sup>202</sup>"Bundeswehr: Dramatischer Einbruch," *Der Spiegel*, 25 June 1990; quoted in National Security Research, 34.

<sup>203</sup>"Generalmajor Naumann," *SISTRA*, September 4, 1990; quoted in National Security Research, 35.



Germany must shoulder its share of the nuclear risk within NATO if it is to continue to be accepted as an equal partner.<sup>204</sup>

Nonetheless, recent trends have complicated the maintenance of an American nuclear presence in Germany. "The 'last resort' emphasis proclaimed at the NATO London summit in 1990 has been interpreted in German circles as signifying, in effect, a return by the United States to a doctrine of 'massive retaliation.'"<sup>205</sup>

According to General Naumann,

A modified NATO will continue to need nuclear weapons in order to balance the Soviet nuclear capability and to maintain the element of uncertainty in the risk calculation of any adversary--to make it impossible for an enemy to plan and wage a war at a calculable risk. Nuclear strategy will reflect the idea of last resort. This might eventually result in a concept of mutually-accepted minimum deterrence, and it will definitely result in a dramatic reduction of nuclear weapons deployed in and around Europe.<sup>206</sup>

The perceived return to a doctrine of "massive retaliation" contradicts the conservative emphasis on "risk-sharing." As the U.S. weapons continue to be removed from the European continent, a gradual "de-coupling" is perceived on the part of some German conservatives. Without a viable Europe-

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<sup>204</sup>Rüdiger Moniac, "NATO Revises Nuclear Strategy for the Post-Cold War Age," *Die Welt*, 22 October 1992; in *The German Tribune*, Hamburg, 30 October 1992, No. 1538, pp. 1-2.

<sup>205</sup>Lothar Rühl, "Partnerschaft mit Moskau als Kern einer Friedensordnung," *Die Welt*, 19 July 1990; quoted in National Security Research, 35.

<sup>206</sup>Klaus Naumann, "Germany's Military Future," in *Meet United Germany*, Susan Stern, ed. (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 1991), 216.

based nuclear weapons force, there is a fear among some Germans that United States "extended deterrence" will lose its validity. These fears were undoubtedly influential in ensuring that the phrase "last resort" did not appear in NATO's November 1991 strategic concept. German conservatives point out that "the gradual weakening of the concept of extended deterrence began years before the fundamental changes in East-West relations."<sup>207</sup> They blame the deterioration on the United States decision to eliminate INF, the continued anti-nuclear rhetoric of recent American presidents, and the German reluctance to implement nuclear modernization.<sup>208</sup> As stated by Pierre Lellouche: "In Europe itself the logic of nuclear weapons deployment was fatally wounded by the signing in 1987 of the INF treaty."<sup>209</sup>

The reduction of U.S. nuclear arms in Europe was accelerated by the October 1991 announcement by NATO that it will remove from Europe half of its stockpile of nuclear bombs intended for aircraft use. "Within two or three years, the alliance will have only 700 nuclear warheads in Europe, about one-

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<sup>207</sup>Enders, Mey, and Rühle, 134.

<sup>208</sup>*Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>209</sup>Pierre Lellouche, "Winner Give All," *Newsweek* (International Edition), 21 October 1991.

tenth of the number deployed in 1967."<sup>210</sup> President Bush's 27 September 1991 announcement began a chain of events that "removed most, but not all, of the immediate bilateral nuclear substance from the U.S.-German security relationship."<sup>211</sup>

The German conservatives want to prevent the complete removal of U.S. nuclear weapons from Germany. From their perspective,

The removal of the U.S. nuclear presence from Europe would imply what some have called 'existential' or 'declaratory' extended deterrence--that is, U.S. nuclear guarantees without the nuclear presence that has historically been seen by many experts and officials as necessary for the credibility of U.S. nuclear commitments.<sup>212</sup>

As trends appear to favor movement towards a nuclear weapons-free Germany, conservative skeptics highlight Germany's vulnerable position:

A strategy of deterrence only, which sidesteps the issue of a coherent employment policy in favor of some vague notions of existential deterrence, or which envisages nuclear use only in the context of large-scale strategic retaliatory strikes, cannot be in Germany's security interest. Such a strategy would not only require an entirely unrealistic and undesirable degree of U.S. self-commitment, but would also narrow the range of U.S. military and, hence, political freedom of action in a way which is incompatible with maintaining alliances worldwide. Ultimately, to maintain the credibility of such a concept would require the United States to create an image of being

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<sup>210</sup>Alan Riding, "NATO Will Cut Atom Weapons for Aircraft Use," *New York Times*, 18 October 1991, A1.

<sup>211</sup>Blackwill, 138.

<sup>212</sup>David S. Yost, "Western Nuclear Force Structures," in *Nuclear Weapons and the Future of European Security*, ed. Beatrice Heuser (London: Brassey's for the Centre for Defence Studies, Kings College, University of London, 1991), 11.

able to act irrationally. Such a strategy of calculated irrationality, however, is not only questionable with respect to its ability to gain domestic and alliance support, it furthermore never has been able to satisfy responsible decision-makers (who, after all, could one day be confronted with the choice of suicide or surrender). Selective and limited strategic options may solve part of the problem; however, they cannot fulfill the important criteria of visibility and, thus, demonstrated credibility of the U.S. engagement.<sup>213</sup>

The dividing argument between the governing CDU/CSU-FDP coalition and the opposition Social Democrats centers on this issue of whether the presence of U.S. nuclear weapons in Germany is a requirement for the sustained security and freedom of the Federal Republic. The "risk-sharing" concept retains that link between the non-strategic nuclear weapons in Europe and the strategic arsenal of the United States. A return to the concept of "massive retaliation" would represent a move towards sole reliance on the strategic arsenal of the United States. The NATO decision to continue to reduce U.S. nuclear weapons in Europe and to postpone a decision on the production of an air-launched missile has steered the nuclear security argument in the direction of the SPD.

The SPD proposes a nuclear weapons-free zone in Central Europe. The Social Democrats call on NATO to "abandon forward defense, flexible response, and nuclear-first-use doctrines and renounce nuclear modernization

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<sup>213</sup>Enders, Mey, and Rühle, pp. 134-135.

plans (notably Tactical Air-to-Surface Missiles or TASM)."<sup>214</sup> The SPD doubts whether nuclear weapons have deterrent value and works for their elimination.

The SPD was at odds with much of American nuclear security policy during the 1980s. "The SPD expressed its opposition to . . . SDI and the accompanying Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty reinterpretation; nuclear testing; . . . and the revival of limited nuclear war scenarios."<sup>215</sup> The "Discriminate Deterrence" report of January 1988 highlighted a number of disparities:

The SPD took issue with much of the report, including its support of the use of an "extreme threat" in regional conflicts; limited nuclear warfare capacity; and its sceptical attitude towards arms control and a chemical weapons ban. "The European reaction to this report", according to the SPD, "could cause exactly what it is trying to hinder: namely self-assertion, de-integration, bilateral structures, and sweeping nuclear arms control."<sup>216</sup>

Recent positive trends have improved the relationship between U.S. policy-makers and the SPD, although differences still remain. The most fundamental of these disagreements is the level of credibility assigned to the deterrent value of nuclear weapons. The future of these weapons in the Federal Republic will hinge on the outcome of deliberations between the CDU/CSU-FDP

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<sup>214</sup>National Security Research, 44.

<sup>215</sup>Matthew A. Weiller, "SPD Security Policy," *Survival*, Vol. 30 (November/December 1988), 524.

<sup>216</sup>"Discriminate Deterrence," *Arbeitskreis I der SPD Bundestagsfraktion*, Bonn, 19 January 1988; quoted in Matthew A. Weiller, 524-525.



government, the SPD, and the United States as they deal with an evolving and unpredictable international security environment.

#### D. FUTURE PROSPECTS

Any American observer of German defense can well recall the positive role that the United States played in the years 1949-1955 in the armament of the Federal Republic of Germany.<sup>217</sup> The United States was the first NATO ally to put aside apprehensions regarding the German military and played a key role in introducing the Germans to the processes of military cooperation enshrined in NATO after 1949, as well as in training the *Bundeswehr* after 1955. In the intervening decades, there has ensued an important doctrinal link between the armies and air forces of the two countries. Despite the reductions in the size of the U.S. military presence in Europe, opportunities for deepened cooperation exist today as well.

The Chief of Staff of the *Bundeswehr*, General Naumann, is concerned that the withdrawal of U.S. forces from Germany could lead to diminished U.S. interest in Germany.<sup>218</sup> He and his staff worry that the withdrawal could weaken the bonds built through the positive personal experiences of those stationed in Germany as well as frustrate the creation of new bonds in the future.

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<sup>217</sup>Abenheim, interview.

<sup>218</sup>Abenheim, interview.

The future of the American security commitment to the Federal Republic will evolve through a combination of governmental policy and public opinion. German public opinion indicates ambivalence with respect to both nuclear weapons and future U.S. troop deployments. Support for the continued presence of foreign troops on German territory, an anomaly for sovereign nations, has dropped to 43%, when the NATO-wary eastern Germans are included.<sup>219</sup> A majority of 70% support the removal of all American nuclear weapons from Germany.<sup>220</sup> These two factors have made German politicians wary of debating the American commitment.

In recent discussions of the U.S. presidential election, several German perspectives on the American commitment were highlighted. Jochen Thies of the German Society for Foreign Policy argued that Germans are more comfortable with George Bush due to his dominant role in German unification. Thies credited the Bush team with "a particular understanding for the Europeans, for the Germans."<sup>221</sup>

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<sup>219</sup>Ronald D. Asmus, "Germany in Transition: National Self-Confidence and International Reticence," statement before the House Sub-Committee on Europe and the Middle East, 1992, 5.

<sup>220</sup>Asmus, "Germany in Transition," 5.

<sup>221</sup>Ruth Walker, "Germans Are at Ease With Clinton or Bush," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 15 October 1992, 5.

Some Germans are concerned about American isolationist tendencies, especially after the conclusion of a prolonged conflict such as the Cold War. Thies noted a general German concern "that a Clinton administration would not be that patient with the Europeans--would expect a strong security contribution, and would proceed faster with the pullout of troops."<sup>222</sup> Ulrich Irmer, the Free Democratic foreign policy spokesman, expressed concern about "tendencies towards isolationism in America," expressing hope that the future American military presence will be "more than symbolic."<sup>223</sup>

Another official from Bonn saw a convergence in the positions of the two leading candidates and was less concerned about future isolationist tendencies. "We know that they [the Americans] will be present in Europe, will stay in the alliance; we can thrash out trade differences, we don't have any fear of a surge in American isolationism."<sup>224</sup>

Karsten Voigt of the SPD sensed a degree of apathy by Germans towards the American election and the future U.S. commitment.

It's not so much because of lack of interest as because they don't have so much to fear from the outcome. It's a different world.<sup>225</sup>

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<sup>222</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>223</sup>*Ibid.*, 5.

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Even if Germans are prepared to urge continued support for the American commitment, there is concern that the United States could leave the Germans hanging, as happened in cases such as the 1977-1978 "neutron bomb" affair. Nevertheless, German government officials continue to emphasize the importance of the American commitment.

According to former Defense Minister Gerhard Stoltenberg,

The Atlantic Alliance remains the most important institution of collective security organization and structuring; for, in the future as in the past, only the close link with North America will be able to counterbalance the strategic capabilities that will continue to be available to the Soviet Union even after the withdrawal of its troops from Central Europe. For this purpose, a continued substantial presence of American conventional and nuclear forces in Europe will be required.<sup>226</sup>

Stoltenberg reaffirmed this American presence requirement a year later in Munich.<sup>227</sup>

Chancellor Kohl declared that "the Atlantic Alliance remains the foundation for peace and freedom in Europe."<sup>228</sup> According to General Naumann, "Only through an alliance with the U.S. can Europe maintain its balance *vis-à-vis* the

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<sup>226</sup>Gerhard Stoltenberg, "Managing the Change: European Security Policy and Transatlantic Relationship in a Time of Change in Europe," Eurogroup Seminar in Bonn, 10-11 April 1991.

<sup>227</sup>Stoltenberg, "Security Policy in the Process of Changing World Politics," Address to the Munich Conference on Security Policy, 8 February 1992.

<sup>228</sup>Helmut Kohl, "German-American Friendship a 'Decisive Precondition' for Mastery of Global Tasks," *The Week in Germany*, 29 May 1992.

Soviet Union, which is in turn, a prerequisite for a policy of co-operation on the basis of equality."<sup>229</sup> It is evident that the Federal Republic will continue to call on the security guarantee of the United States. The exact form of this guarantee is subject to the security circumstances and the political leadership of the day in the United States and Germany.

The United States has at times shown itself to be ambivalent about its security commitments to Europe and the Federal Republic. Yet current conditions realistically leave the Americans no choice. As Christoph Bertram argues,

America, understandably, does not want to see its survival at stake in the event of a war in Europe, particularly a nuclear war. And Ronald Reagan [with respect to Reykjavik] has not been the first and will not be the last American president to try to escape from a NATO doctrine which suggests otherwise: massive retaliation (Eisenhower), flexible response (Kennedy, Johnson), limited nuclear options (Nixon, Carter) and the vision of strategic defence which would render nuclear missiles "impotent and obsolete"--these are all examples of the recurrent desire of American leaders to avoid involvements in a theatre conflict of which they cannot control the limits.

It is possible that, as this author believes, these attempts will always be frustrated. As long as the United States remains committed to the security of Western Europe with all its military potential, all efforts to introduce additional fire-breaks on the slope of escalation once the central fire-break, that of passage of deterrence to nuclear use, has been crossed are likely to be futile. Only if the United States should ever become convinced that its security is confined to the integrity of the national territory of the Western

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<sup>229</sup>Asmus, "Germany and America: Partners," 547.



hemisphere, will it escape from the consequences of extending deterrence to other regions. As a world power America does not have this choice.<sup>230</sup>

One central reason why the United States cannot withdraw from Europe is that it would put Germany in a position which neither country would like. According to Josef Joffe, "The ultimate implication of a Western Europe minus the United States, . . . is a nuclear-armed Federal Republic."<sup>231</sup> The U.S. withdrawal would create a European security leadership vacuum that the Federal Republic would be forced to fill.

Such a development would therefore cause serious domestic political divisions as well as uneasiness among its neighbors. The possible emergence of an independent German nuclear force, which could lie at the end of this road, would be a profoundly unsettling option.<sup>232</sup>

The debate on the American nuclear guarantee to the Federal Republic is currently subdued. This is certainly the preferred level of intensity for politicians in both countries. The Federal Republic and the United States will probably concentrate on domestic priorities in the near-term, and issues involving nuclear deterrence will remain in the background. Nevertheless, it would be short-

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<sup>230</sup>Christoph Bertram, "Britain's Nuclear Weapons and West German Security," in Karl Kaiser and John Roper, eds., *British-German Defence Cooperation: Partners Within the Alliance* (London: Jane's, 1988), 201-202.

<sup>231</sup>Josef Joffe, "Europe's American Pacifier," *Foreign Policy* no. 54 (Spring 1984): 78.

<sup>232</sup>"The Franco-German Corps and the Future of European Security: Implications for U.S. Policy," *Policy Consensus Reports* (Washington, DC: The Johns Hopkins Foreign Policy Institute, June 1992), 2.

sighted for either country to surrender the bilateral security relationship. The uncertainty and instability which currently dominate the Federal Republic's eastern neighbors are a potential threat to the futures of both Germany and America. Only with Germany and America working as "partners in leadership" can the future challenges of the post-Cold War security environment be overcome.

## V. GERMAN PERSPECTIVES ON THE FORMER SOVIET UNION

### A. INTRODUCTION

The Soviet Union provided the classic threat that solidified the German-American alliance and commitment. As discussed in the previous chapter, the dissolution of the Soviet empire has challenged this commitment. The sweeping changes in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union have also presented new challenges to the security of the Federal Republic.

This chapter surveys these new threats and the role of nuclear deterrence in meeting them. It begins with an examination of the nature of the relations between Germany and its eastern neighbors, concentrating on the former Soviet Union. The chapter continues with German perspectives on threats and risks arising from the East such as nuclear weapons, instability, and mass emigration. It concludes with a discussion of Germany's primary security goals in the East.

### B. GERMANY'S NEW ROLE

The power vacuum created by the receding Soviet empire has provided the Federal Republic with new opportunities and a new role on the continent. According to Robert Livingston,

The Atlantic-orientated West Germany that we knew from 1949 to 1990 was an abnormality in German history. Russian power has now receded from

Eastern Europe. And as has so often happened in the past, German power is replacing it there.<sup>233</sup>

With its new role, the Federal Republic also gained new responsibilities. The Germans now must build a new partnership with the East. According to Lothar Rühl, "Germany will once again have to look East, as well as West. It must and will be a reliable partner in security and cooperation for Russia."<sup>234</sup>

Germany's support for the North Atlantic Cooperation Council discussed in chapter three is an example of this new bridge-building role. The Federal Republic moved quickly to promote stability and security with its eastern neighbors. Germany places great emphasis on the rapid inclusion of the countries to the east in all possible forums of cooperation. According to former Defense Minister Rupert Scholz:

The political strength of a reunified Germany, and above all its geopolitical position in the center of Europe, are not without central meaning for the future structure of Europe and for a truly viable all-European peace order. There where the two German fragments were literally the front-states in the East-West conflict, there a reunified Germany, precisely because of its ties to the West as well as to the European unification process, will also have to

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<sup>233</sup>Robert Gerald Livingston, "United Germany: Bigger and Better," *Foreign Policy* no.87 (Summer 1992): 166.

<sup>234</sup>Lothar Rühl, "Limits Of Leadership: Germany," in Steven Muller and Gebhard Schweigler, eds., *From Occupation to Cooperation: The United States and United Germany in a Changing World Order* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1992), 111.

assume functions of bridge-building to eastern Europe, and thereby also to the Soviet Union.<sup>235</sup>

### C. NEW THREATS FROM THE EAST

"Germany feels highly vulnerable to instability in the East."<sup>236</sup> Government officials and intellectuals have made arguments highlighting this perceived vulnerability. In Kohl's words, "What will be needed more than anything else is to stabilize the political, economic, and social conditions in Central and Southeastern Europe as well as in the successor states of the Soviet Union."<sup>237</sup>

German fears of instability in the East can be divided into four main areas: the future of former Soviet nuclear weapons, the status of Russian troops in eastern Germany, potential mass emigration from the East, and the possible emergence of authoritarian governments in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.<sup>238</sup> Germans are concerned that the fragmentation of the Soviet empire has created a conglomeration of independent states with immense challenges before them. These new states may lack the resources, both economic and

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<sup>235</sup>Rupert Scholz, "Die Sowjetunion setzt vor allem in wirtschaftlicher Hinsicht auf Deutschland," *Die Welt*, 18 September 1990; quoted in National Security Research, 25.

<sup>236</sup>Livingston, 166.

<sup>237</sup>Kohl cited in Livingston, 166.

<sup>238</sup>Robert D. Blackwill, "Patterns of Partnership: The U.S.-German Security Relationship in the 1990s," in *Occupation*, Muller and Schweigler, 121.



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liberal asylum laws, and the SPD's recent decision in favor of tightening controls may indicate a political consensus on the issue.<sup>241</sup>

Germany will be the first European Community country to bear the brunt of any mass exodus resulting from a chaotic dissolution of the former Soviet Union. While conditions remain reasonably stable, the German government is making efforts to ensure an adequate environment for the ethnic Volga Germans that remain in the region in order to discourage their movement west to Germany. The German government is also attempting to negotiate agreements with East European governments to return refugees in an effort to stem anti-foreigner violence in Germany. The Germans are already overwhelmed with refugee problems in their country and chaos in the East could be disastrous. According to German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel, immigration is threatening the stability of German democracy.<sup>242</sup>

## **2. Friendly Buffer Zone**

The Federal Republic has gained strategic depth as a result of the historic change in Europe. In addition to gaining the territory of eastern Germany, the Federal Republic has a buffer between itself and the former Soviet

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<sup>241</sup>Francine S. Kiefer, "Germans Agree To Tighten Asylum Process," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 18 November 1992, 1.

<sup>242</sup>"Refugees: Keep Out," *The Economist* (19 September 1992): 64.

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Preventing negative trends in this vast region is of vital interest to the Germans. The establishment of authoritarian regimes with nationalistic platforms would certainly disrupt economic relations and jeopardize German security. The Federal Republic has concentrated economic aid and political and social support on the emerging democracies to the East in order to assist the development of regime legitimacy and underpin the transfer to democracy. If these efforts fail, the Federal Republic may be swamped with refugees as outlined in the scenario above.

### 3. Nuclear Weapons

Despite the numerous agreements that have been concluded since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the future of the nuclear weapons in this region is still in question. The emergence of additional nuclear weapons states on Germany's eastern border is a major security concern of the Federal Republic. The Germans are also concerned about the safety of these weapons and potential nuclear strategies that may emerge in the new strategic situation. The former Soviet Union will not be able to isolate its nuclear command and control structure from the society within which it is embedded.<sup>244</sup> German efforts to control problems of instability outlined in the previous two sections are of great

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<sup>244</sup>Kurt M. Campbell, Ashton B. Carter, Steven E. Miller, and Charles A. Zraket, "Soviet Nuclear Fission: Control of the Nuclear Arsenal in a Disintegrating Soviet Union," *CSIA Studies in International Security No. 1*, 1 November 1991, i.

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might become a target for grabbing in some civil conflict or become an issue or, worse, an instrument, in interstate conflict.<sup>247</sup>

Nuclear proliferation to Ukraine and/or Belarus could shake the structure of security in Central Europe. These two countries could set off a chain of proliferation in Eastern Europe that could force the Federal Republic to rethink its nuclear options. Although currently there is much domestic opposition to any move in the nuclear direction, the nuclearization of additional states on Germany's eastern borders could change the German perspective in this realm.<sup>248</sup>

Some German experts might see limited nuclear proliferation as being in the interest of the Federal Republic. Proliferation to states such as Ukraine or Belarus could produce a "nuclear-equipped buffer zone" that would stand between Moscow and Germany.<sup>249</sup>

As German experts have sifted through the mounds of documents which they seized in eastern Germany, they have begun to obtain a feel for the operational plans of countries heavily influenced by the former Soviet Union. With respect to nuclear strategy, Lothar Rühl discovered that despite the USSR's

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<sup>247</sup>*Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>248</sup>*Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>249</sup>*Ibid.*, 63.

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As German experts have sifted through the mounds of documents which they seized in eastern Germany, they have begun to obtain a feel for the operational plans of countries heavily influenced by the former Soviet Union. With respect to nuclear strategy, Lothar Rühl discovered that despite the USSR's

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<sup>247</sup>*Ibid.*, 60.

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sovereign German territory, but the likelihood for ethnic, and possibly domestic political turmoil within this grouping of forces cannot be dismissed as being impossible. Thus, should these forces become internally unstable, for whatever reason, Bonn, and perhaps eventually NATO, could be faced with a politically explosive situation in trying to reestablish stability.<sup>252</sup>

These forces are scheduled to be removed by the end of 1994. Until that point German relations with Russia will focus on the smooth and rapid withdrawal of these troops and equipment. Some observers judge that the Federal Republic might find it difficult to obtain outside support in the event of a conflict with Russia about this troop withdrawal as Germany's allies might fear the potential for escalation. Dr. Young highlights this problem:

If Bonn concludes that it alone will have to deal with instability associated with the remaining Soviet military presence in its country, it will have no choice but to consider the option of accelerating the process of nationalizing its national defense, with all the political repercussions that would produce. And that surely must be an eventuality no one in Europe, or North America, wishes to come to pass.<sup>253</sup>

#### **D. MEETING THE THREAT**

Germany's policy for dealing with perceived threats from the East has taken varied forms. The Federal Republic has been the leader among Western countries in providing economic aid to its eastern neighbors, hoping to alleviate instability.

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The Germans are presently experiencing within their own country, many of the problems of their eastern neighbors. Unification has highlighted the large task that remains before the emerging democracies of Eastern Europe and the former USSR. According to Christoph Bertram,

The immense task of transforming a centralized planning economy into a market one while maintaining political stability; the human hardship facing those who have to learn to live in a competitive society; the mortgage of degradation piled up by the old regimes, which will have to be paid off for a long time to come; the task of introducing the rule of law into what was a discretionary political system--all of these problems have to be solved throughout Eastern Europe.<sup>256</sup>

Germany's current tribulations over absorbing its new eastern *Länder* (the former East Germany) stimulate concerns about the prospects of countries unable to draw on such large capital reserves.

The Federal Republic has been quite ambitious in its moves to keep the faltering Russian economy afloat. The Germans "are willing to provide substantial finance to minimize the damage that might follow from a more rapid economic decline."<sup>257</sup> As the region becomes more dependent on financial backing from the Federal Republic, Germany's influence in Central and Eastern Europe will increase.

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Russian ventures in the East, the Russians are wary of a German move to fill the Soviet vacuum left in Eastern Europe. In the Russian perspective, the "American forces/nuclear weapons offer an important restraint against future German ambitions in the East."<sup>260</sup>

Russia will remain the strongest military power on the Eurasian land mass for the foreseeable future. The Federal Republic must take this reality into account as it formulates future security plans. "German foreign policy is dictated by avoidance of steps that will provoke or irritate the [former] Soviet Union."<sup>261</sup> What Germany must avoid is pursuing an Eastern policy without a defense policy.<sup>262</sup>

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## B. THE THREAT

The threat to Europe's southern periphery was recently highlighted by the Gulf War. The aggression by Iraq exemplified most of the potential challenges to Europe's security from the periphery. Iraq threatened European access to natural resources and markets, stimulated international terrorism, and exhibited the proliferation of new weapons technologies.<sup>264</sup>

This discussion concentrates on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their potential delivery vehicles. In the following section each country is surveyed with respect to its capabilities for nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons. The section concludes with an examination of ballistic missile capabilities on Europe's periphery.

### 1. Nuclear Weapons

According to Leonard Spector's 1990 analysis, "For the next five to ten years, Israel is likely to remain the only Middle Eastern nation to possess nuclear weapons or the ability to manufacture them."<sup>265</sup> Israel has not gone public with its reported nuclear weapons program. Much of what is known of its program

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unlikely to remain in Iraq indefinitely. Continued aspirations to nuclear weapons capabilities will remain a threat from Iraq for the foreseeable future.

Iran is actively responding to these developments from its neighbor to the west. "According to White House officials quoted earlier this month [December 1991], the United States government is convinced that Iran has launched a secret effort to build the bomb."<sup>270</sup> Recent reports also indicate a secret agreement between China and Algeria supplying a nuclear reactor large enough to make weapons-grade plutonium.<sup>271</sup> The prospect of anti-Western, fundamentalist Islamic republics in possession of nuclear weapons is widely seen as a possible future security problem for Europe.<sup>272</sup>

Syria's nuclear program has raised concerns over its "suspicious intentions."<sup>273</sup> Syria is not known to have significant nuclear facilities, although in February 1992 the Syrians indicated their intention to import a small research

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We do not need an atomic bomb, we have the dual chemical. Whoever threatens us with the atomic bomb, we will annihilate him with the dual chemical.<sup>277</sup>

Chemical weapons proliferation is difficult to assess due to the multiple uses of many of the associated chemicals. Without stringent procedures like those used by the United Nations in Iraq, stemming further proliferation will be problematic. Most of the countries have the capability for autonomous production, and in some cases this capability was provided by the Germans.<sup>278</sup>

According to Kathleen Bailey, "Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Libya are among those that have taken the position that an Arab chemical weapons capability is necessary to counter Israel's nuclear capability."<sup>279</sup> The Arabs refuse to make arrangements which would freeze what they consider to be Israeli nuclear hegemony in the region.

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Biological and toxin weapons are less widespread due to complications involved with control, storage and stability. Nevertheless, Iraq "is said to be

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Ballistic missiles were used extensively in the Iran-Iraq war. Iran's motives for obtaining ballistic missiles were to respond to Iraqi missile attacks and to compensate for Iraqi air superiority.<sup>283</sup>

So long as Iraq remains its principal adversary, Iran will likely continue to emphasize short-range (300 km and less) missile systems capable of placing Iraq's major cities at risk. Attempts to improve missile accuracy, in order to enhance capabilities for tactical missions, will take precedence over desires to increase range. If, on the other hand, the threats emanating from other Arab countries, or Israel, increase in the near future, Iran may seek longer-range systems.<sup>284</sup>

Israel has the capability to indigenously produce medium-range ballistic missiles with a range of at least 900 miles.<sup>285</sup> "Many believe that Israel's Jericho missiles are, or readily could be, fitted with nuclear warheads."<sup>286</sup> Such capabilities would enable the Israelis to threaten any potential Arab aggressor.

After suffering humiliating defeats at the hands of the Israelis, the Syrians have pursued weapons modernization programs, including the acquisition

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Qadhafi may want missiles because he lacks enough pilots or the infrastructure to support a strong air force, and because of his desire to project power against out-of-area adversaries, such as the countries of southern Europe.<sup>292</sup>

### C. ANALYZING THE THREAT

The mere possession or, in some cases, potential for possession of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery vehicles is not the sole factor that implies a potential threat to Europe's southern periphery. A concentration on the element of capability without an analysis of the political aims these weapons might serve would produce an empty argument.<sup>293</sup>

There is little question that the Middle East and North Africa are volatile regions. "A population explosion, economic underdevelopment, radical Islamic leaders, and a proliferation of ballistic missiles with chemical and possibly nuclear warheads" are factors warranting European attention.<sup>294</sup> The question remains, "Why would African and Middle Eastern countries want to fire, or threaten to

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During the Gulf War Germany had great difficulty coming to terms with its obligations to its Turkish ally, highlighting potential conflicts in future scenarios. Internal turmoil erupted in Germany as the opposition reacted to government decisions to send *Luftwaffe* aircraft to Turkey. Public opinion was divided on the obligation and the government was ineffectual and slow in communicating German alliance cohesion. The experience damaged German credibility in NATO and stimulated internal debate concerning a re-direction of German threat perceptions. According to Karl Kaiser and Klaus Becher, "Security issues in the Mediterranean and Middle East, as the Iraqi crisis demonstrated beyond doubt, have become an immediate concern for the security and defence policy of European countries, including Germany."<sup>299</sup>

Currently the direct threat to Europe from the southern periphery is remote and hypothetical.

If countries in North Africa and the Middle East acquire nuclear weapons to tip their ballistic missiles or to arm their strike aircraft, this capability can also be thought of as threatening. But again, it is unclear why these countries would want to use such weapons against Western Europe.<sup>300</sup>

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Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf could become as important a preoccupation for German security policy as the Russian problem.<sup>303</sup>

Lothar Rühl used a similar line of reasoning to justify a new rationale for NATO.

For the security of Europe, the defense to the south will, in the future, be of greater significance than the defense to the east from the Central Front. A commensurate shift of means (by the Alliance) is unavoidable. In the future, Europe's security will be enhanced not so much by NATO's eastward expansion to the Oder-Neisse, but rather by the strengthening of its southern flank.<sup>304</sup>

Other Germans are less convinced of an imminent shift in priorities for the Federal Republic or NATO. These critics do not expect the future threats from the South to be met with military means. General Klaus Naumann is one of these skeptics.

I do not believe that an expansion of the region of the Alliance is called for [by the Middle East events] . . . because a military threat to a collective defense alliance in the classical sense is unlikely to emerge in those areas. There is the potential of threats aimed at vulnerable industrial societies. But at least in the foreseeable future, . . . I can conceive of no case that could be resolved by NATO with the classical means of the Alliance.<sup>305</sup>

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Stoltenberg continues this line of reasoning, this time being more specific:

In the area of tension embracing the Islamic countries from Pakistan to Algeria, this marks in particular a zone for potential "faults" that extends to the immediate vicinity of Europe. Considering the very high dependence on free access to raw materials and on the freedom of the seas and of the air with a view to the existence of the West European and also North American countries, any events happening in this region and others can greatly affect the economic and social bases of the West.<sup>308</sup>

German military planners attempting to justify a more active role for the *Bundeswehr* allude to threats to Europe's southern periphery. "Acute dangers to Europe's security and stability can also be observed in regions outside Europe, such as northern Africa or the Middle East."<sup>309</sup> In molding Germany's security interests these strategists propose two goals:

- the maintenance of free world trade and access to strategic raw materials
- the creation, preservation, and safeguarding of worldwide political, economic, military and ecological stability.<sup>310</sup>

The German government emphasizes the dangers of proliferation as an emerging threat. Chancellor Helmut Kohl recently "stressed the seriousness of security issues today, particularly the proliferation of nuclear, biological and

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The Non-Proliferation treaty must be extended indefinitely in 1995. If we fail to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons mankind will become exposed to a nuclear threat no less frightening than that of the Cold war. We cannot put the nuclear genie back in the bottle, but we must keep it under strict control.<sup>313</sup>

Karl Kaiser argues that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction can threaten Western interests directly and indirectly. The indirect threat stems from the regional instability which would evolve from the proliferation of these weapons in circumstances lacking the traditional controls which stabilized the East-West conflict. The direct threat stems from the combination of these weapons with the spread of missile technology. Kaiser also alludes to the possibility of terrorists obtaining weapons of mass destruction and threatening the Federal Republic.<sup>314</sup>

## 2. Threat?

Through numerous public statements the German government has delineated its perception of the security threat from the South. The Germans highlight underdeveloped economies, overpopulated countries, and unstable political regimes, challenges to free trade, disputed access to vital natural resources, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Nevertheless,

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<sup>313</sup>Klaus Kinkel, Speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations, New York, 23 September 1992, *Statements and Speeches* Vol. 25, No. 13 (New York: German Information Center, 1992), 3.

<sup>314</sup>Karl Kaiser, "Security Relationships: Germany," *Occupation*, Muller and Schweigler, pp. 161-162.



The Non-Proliferation treaty must be extended indefinitely in 1995. If we fail to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons mankind will become exposed to a nuclear threat no less frightening than that of the Cold war. We cannot put the nuclear genie back in the bottle, but we must keep it under strict control.<sup>313</sup>

Karl Kaiser argues that the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction can threaten Western interests directly and indirectly. The indirect threat stems from the regional instability which would evolve from the proliferation of these weapons in circumstances lacking the traditional controls which stabilized the East-West conflict. The direct threat stems from the combination of these weapons with the spread of missile technology. Kaiser also alludes to the possibility of terrorists obtaining weapons of mass destruction and threatening the Federal Republic.<sup>314</sup>

## 2. Threat?

Through numerous public statements the German government has delineated its perception of the security threat from the South. The Germans highlight underdeveloped economies, overpopulated countries, and unstable political regimes, challenges to free trade, disputed access to vital natural resources, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Nevertheless,

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<sup>313</sup>Klaus Kinkel, Speech to the General Assembly of the United Nations, New York, 23 September 1992, *Statements and Speeches* Vol. 25, No. 13 (New York: German Information Center, 1992), 3.

<sup>314</sup>Karl Kaiser, "Security Relationships: Germany," *Occupation*, Muller and Schweigler, pp. 161-162.

manufacturers of substantial and profitable business meeting the needs of Arab populations.<sup>316</sup>

The level of threat that Germans face from the South will continue to be a source of debate. Although Germany is not directly threatened by weapons from Europe's southern periphery, that threat will increase with the current trend of proliferation. The Middle East and northern Africa are likely to remain an area of volatility. Germany's policy prescription to deal with this eventuality is the subject of the next section.

### 3. Meeting The Threat

The Germans have several policy options to meet the emerging security challenges from the South. The Federal Republic is certain to attempt to develop closer trading ties and measures to accelerate economic growth in the area. These efforts already receive great emphasis in the East and as problems arise in the South, non-military options are the premiere choice of policy makers.

Nevertheless, the Federal Republic will have to prepare for a contingency in which economic measures and closer political ties have failed to limit tension. Some German experts may look to the Gulf War as an example of the potential for conventional deterrence. Third World countries which show progress towards development of weapons of mass destruction may be deterred

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<sup>316</sup>Walter Russell Mead, "The Once and Future Reich" *World Policy Journal* Volume VII, No.4 (Fall 1990): 638.

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northern Africa. "He said that the wave of Islamic fundamentalism has now reached Algeria, and the security policy consequences for southern Europe must be taken very seriously."<sup>319</sup>

Germans continue to call for this protection within the umbrella of NATO. Beatrice Heuser, a German security analyst, summarizes NATO's rationale for nuclear weapons:

Nuclear weapons, in short, will continue to be needed by NATO to counterbalance the nuclear capabilities of any unpredictable, undemocratic, or hostile power. Quite apart from the military threat posed by nuclear arms in the hands of belligerent powers, the mere unilateral possession of such weapons creates the precondition for blackmail.<sup>320</sup>

Applying traditional deterrence theory to threats from the southern periphery is problematic. One difficulty is whether the Federal Republic can count on the United States to threaten to employ nuclear weapons against a threat from the South, in the same way it promised to exert such threats against the Soviet Union. Leonard S. Spector ties the regional threat problem together with nuclear proliferation.

The 1991 Gulf War and the more recent disintegration of the Soviet Union strongly suggest that the most serious challenges to U.S. security in the coming decade are likely to be posed by hostile regional powers. Such powers will be able to threaten American interests abroad, as well as American forces deployed overseas, and, in some cases, even the continental United States. *The success of such regional actors in challenging American power*

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<sup>319</sup>*Ibid.*, 17.

<sup>320</sup>Heuser, 221.

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For example, would deterrence work against an irrational actor? While it is fair to point out that the world has not seen any Hitlers in power since the end of the Thousand-Year Reich--that is, an irrational leader with the will and the means to project his madness well beyond his own borders--such departures from the norm occur with significant frequency. A world with many centers of decision making and an increasing number of nuclear powers will also see a greater likelihood of one supreme decision maker turning mad. Fundamentalist religions, like Hitler's racist creed, could be the source of such destructive irrationality. . . . Are the subtleties of the game of nuclear deterrence as they have developed over the past decades comprehensible to a new nuclear power? Can the taboo that has existed on the use of nuclear weapons since 1945 remain unbroken indefinitely? Decisions will have to be made with many factors remaining unknown, and with potential consequences of error being enormous.<sup>323</sup>

## E. CONCLUSION

Europe's security environment has experienced an enormous transition with the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Germany is re-defining its own security identity within the larger European realm. Attention is now divided between the instability in the East and the emerging threat from the South.

A volatile region without the resources to support its growing population, Europe's southern periphery will be a security challenge for some time. The growth of Islamic fundamentalist ideas which are vehemently anti-Western only fuels unrest. Economic interdependence provides incentives for the maintenance of free and open trade. The North-South division is increasing every day as population growth exceeds economic growth in the Third World. Instability in

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## VII. ANALYSIS/CONCLUSION

The future of German nuclear policy is uncertain in the changed security environment of the post-Cold War era. The experience of the last forty years is likely to deeply affect this policy. The Federal Republic will continue to face alliance uncertainties, threats from the South and East, and a volatile public which is wary of nuclear weapons.

The goal of this thesis has been to reach informed judgments concerning Germany and the future of nuclear deterrence in Europe. Prior to presenting any conclusions it is important to first recall the overall context of German security policy. The Federal Republic is currently absorbed in the national unification process. Preoccupations regarding anti-foreigner violence, exchange rate controversy and European unity have only enhanced Germany's turn inward. The future of nuclear deterrence in Europe is not the "front burner" issue in the Federal Republic.

Indeed, international security issues no longer receive much attention in Germany. The Federal Republic no longer considers itself a front-line state. Military power has lost what little importance it had with many Germans. The Deutschemark is considered Germany's premiere diplomatic lever in an international system less constrained by superpower conflict. The peaceful

victory achieved in the cold war has only strengthened German convictions advocating a reliance on economic and diplomatic means.<sup>325</sup>

This context helps shape some of the conclusions of this study. The Federal Republic will probably avoid making any decisions on the future of nuclear deterrence for several years. The Germans will maintain the *status quo*: that is, permitting the continued stationing of a small number of U.S. gravity-bomb nuclear weapons assigned to dual-capable aircraft. The political debate that would surround modernization is currently considered unacceptable, partly because most German political leaders are unwilling at this time to completely denuclearize Germany.

As for the series of issues addressed in this thesis, the main findings may be summarized as follows. The prospects for British-French nuclear cooperation leading to the development of a joint "European" deterrent appear slim. Due to fiscal constraints, the two countries may be forced to cooperate to reduce costs. Nevertheless, the political ties required to jointly control nuclear weapons are probably years away. The Federal Republic is unwilling to accept a guarantee from either France or Britain as a substitute for U.S. nuclear protection. Neither country is trusted at the required level, nor is either considered capable of providing adequate protection. In the extended long term, it appears that closer

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<sup>325</sup>Klaus Naumann, "Germany's Military Future," in *Meet United Germany*, ed. Susan Stern (Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, 1991), 211.

European unity is essential. In this light, political ties which place an equal premium on each region of Europe will certainly support a "European" deterrent.

The Germans will probably continue to rely on the American guarantee as long as it is available and credible. Pressure will be great from isolationist strands within the United States to bring military forces home. Nevertheless, the United States will probably continue to provide the guarantee, partly in order to avoid a situation where Germany must pursue its own force. In the Federal Republic the presence of U.S. forces is no longer an important political issue. Until all Russian forces withdraw from eastern Germany, pressure for removing U.S. forces and nuclear weapons will probably be more pronounced in the United States than in Germany. The Federal Republic has dealt with these pressures from the onset of the U.S. guarantee, and is unlikely to overreact.

After 1994, when the Russians are expected to have completely withdrawn from eastern Germany and a new election may bring a possible change in government, German political attitudes may change. The momentum might be sufficient to stimulate advocates of a nuclear weapons-free Federal Republic. Several German experts are nonetheless skeptical that a new government would be willing to sacrifice the insurance provided by the American nuclear guarantee.

Germany is most directly threatened by the potential instability of its eastern neighbors, most specifically the Russians. The Federal Republic will avoid any



overtures at this time which might delay the timely withdrawal of Russian forces from eastern Germany. Germany's perception of the threat from the East will be the most critical determining factor in its security decisions in the future. A continued U.S. nuclear guarantee will be desired to counter the potential of the thousands of nuclear weapons which will remain in the former Soviet Union for the remainder of the decade and beyond.

How is the Federal Republic of Germany going to deal with the problems which are developing on Europe's southern periphery? Counting on nonproliferation measures to succeed in curbing the spread of nuclear weapons is wishful thinking. Many of the more direct threats to be faced by the Federal Republic can not be met with military means. Conventional deterrence has not proven itself, and missile defenses are considered too costly by most Germans at this time. Germans foresee difficulties in the region but rarely see a role for nuclear deterrence. Several German experts propose the retention of a U.S. nuclear guarantee in order to meet the potential of nuclear blackmail. Nonetheless, because of their distance from the Mediterranean, the Germans are less concerned about threats from the south than are countries such as France and Italy.

The Germans are unlikely to pursue an autonomous national nuclear deterrent. There is currently no domestic constituency in favor of such a move,

and many would actively combat a German turn in a nuclear direction. Only if Germany's eastern neighbors threatened its security, proliferation spread extensively, and the Federal Republic was insecure in its American or "European" guarantee, would it be probable that Germany would rethink its nuclear option. Casual observers of European security affairs that argue that German attainment of a national nuclear deterrent is inevitable underestimate the strong antimilitary and antinuclear sentiment in today's German political culture.

The Federal Republic of Germany is the linchpin in the future of nuclear deterrence in Europe. Nuclear deterrence has been reduced in its level of importance, owing to the changes in international political circumstances. The Germans are preoccupied with domestic challenges in the near term and are unlikely to bring the issue to the forefront in the near future. In the longer term the Federal Republic will have to make some choices. It is in the interests of the United States that these German decisions are simplified through a credible U.S. nuclear guarantee. As Elizabeth Pond has pointed out, "Today's ultimate threat of nuclear annihilation surely counsels preventive engagement to help maintain a benign political system in Europe, rather than another belated intervention after events have spun out of control."<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>326</sup>Elizabeth Pond, "Germany in the New Europe," *Foreign Affairs* Vol. 71, No. 2 (Spring 1992): 117.

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